

Sight & Sound

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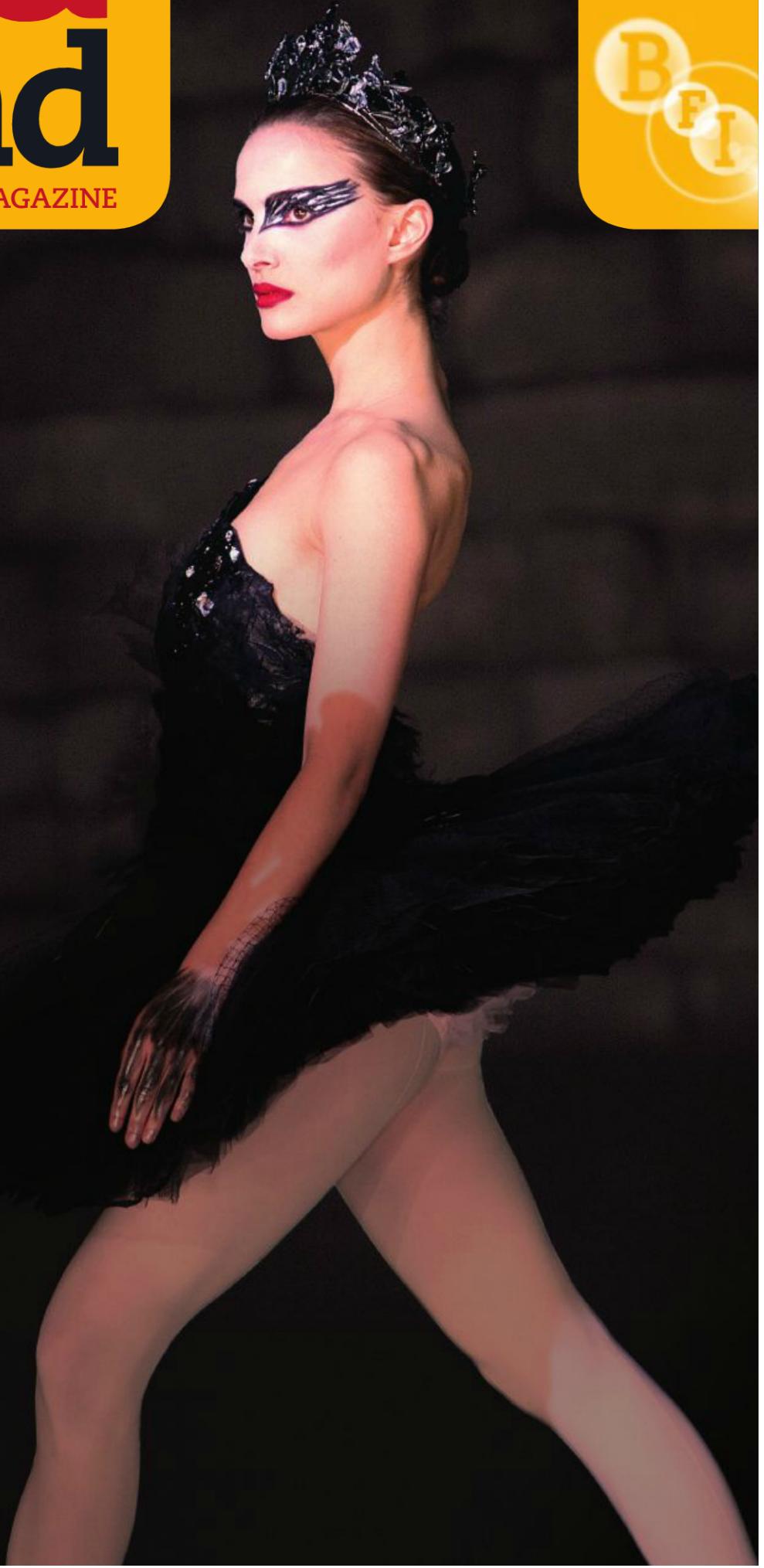
DARREN ARONOFSKY
"SCANDALISES"
NATALIE PORTMAN

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Jeff Bridges in the
Coens' 'True Grit'

Danny Boyle pins
down '127 Hours'

Michael Mann on
Howard Hawks's 'Scarface'

Peter Mullan's
Glasgow kiss: 'Neds'



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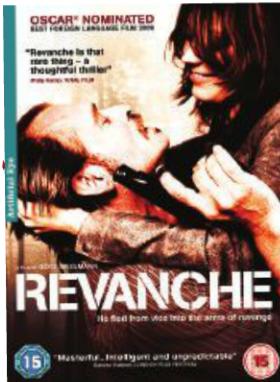
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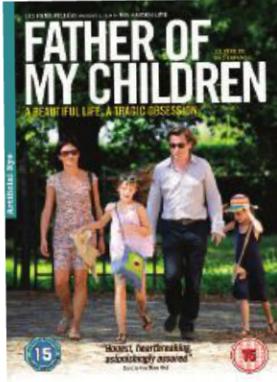
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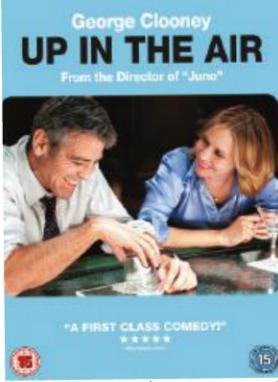
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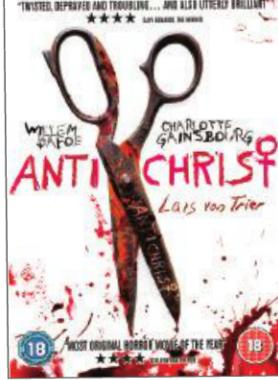
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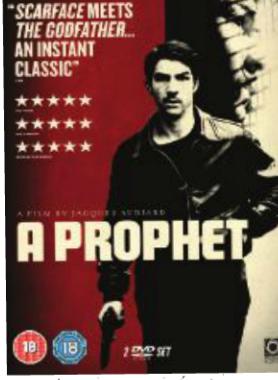
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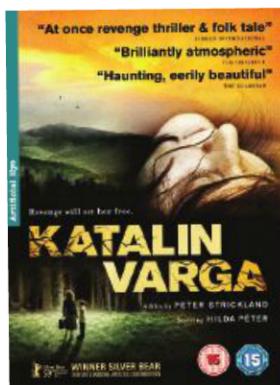
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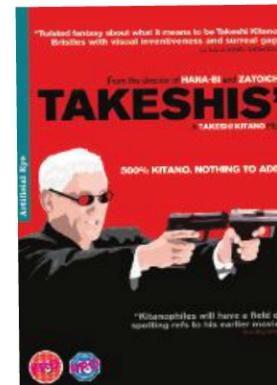
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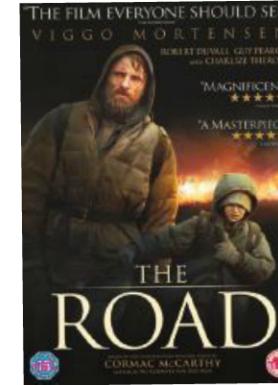
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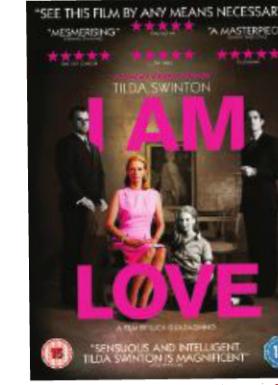
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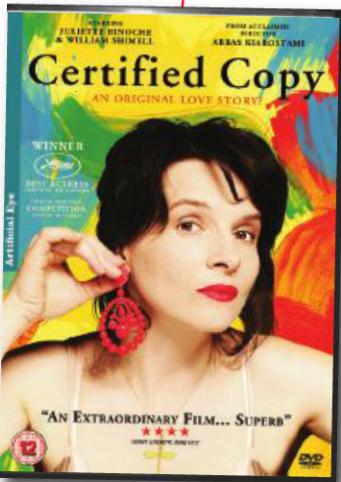


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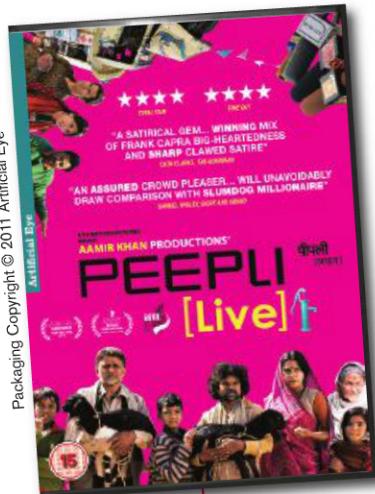
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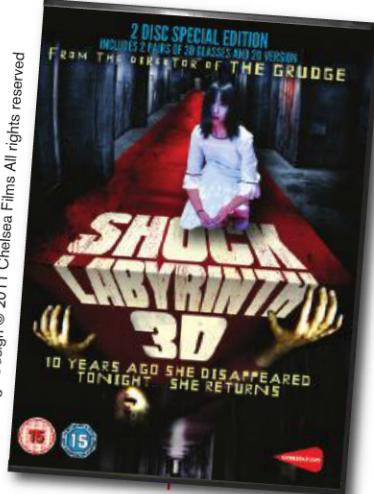
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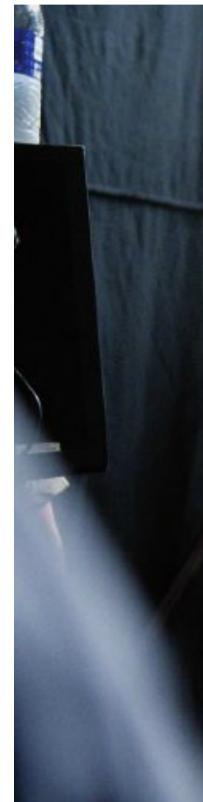
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COVER

Natalie Portman in 'Black Swan'

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Welcome. What does it take for a filmmaker to get a great performance out of an actor – or, more to the point, an actress? Natalie Portman (far left) was apparently pushed to the limit by her director Darren Aronofsky on *Black Swan* (p.32). The great Howard Hawks (p.24), meanwhile, preferred to construct his heroines in the glamorous image of his wife Slim – though Hawks was pretty good with the guys too, as Michael Mann attests in his analysis of a scene from *Scarface* (p.28). Staying in the man's man's world, the Coen brothers reimagine the western with *True Grit* (left, and p.16), Danny Boyle tests our endurance with *127 Hours* (p.20) and Peter Mullan – once a bit player for Boyle – revisits the Glasgow gang culture that formed him in his visceral feature *Neds* (p.38). After so much testosterone, what better than a spot of old-fashioned Disney (p.30) to soothe the nerves?  **Nick James**

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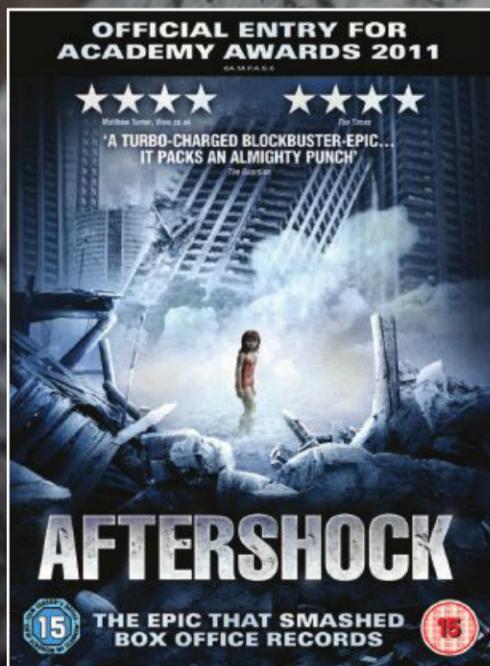


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NICK JAMES

MAKING THE CALL



the responsibility to look after the lottery funding of UK cinema, and to be the main strategic body for the UK film industry.

At the same time, in keeping with government cuts across the arts, the non-filmmaking part of the BFI must plan for a 15 per cent reduction in its existing grant-in-aid. These contradictory events have set in train a restructuring and refocusing of the BFI's role that will take time to shake down into a shape on which we can comment.

These changes do not (so far) alter this magazine's immediate plans, but they do make it hard to speculate about what might happen in British cinema. As soon as we can, however, we'll dedicate an issue to the new British cinema landscape.

In the meantime, new films that we're looking forward to covering include Terrence Malick's *The Tree of Life*, Martin Scorsese's *Hugo Cabret*, Terence Davies's *The Deep Blue Sea*, Paolo Sorrentino's *This Must Be the Place*, Gus Van Sant's *Restless*, Walter Salles's *On the Road*, Bong Joon-ho's *Snow Piercer*, Werner Herzog's *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*, Lynne Ramsay's *We Need to Talk About Kevin*, Lou Ye's *Love and Bruises*, Steven Spielberg's *War Horse*, David Cronenberg's *A Dangerous Method*, Mia Hansen-Løve's *Un amour de jeunesse* and Pawel Pawlikowski's *The Woman in the Fifth*.

A special issue will look to 'The Future of Cinema', asking writers to consider the consequences of continuing technological advances, changes in audience reception and shifts in the market-place. Also planned is an issue dedicated to critically overlooked mainstream cinema. We'll be advocating films to challenge *Citizen Kane* for the title of 'the world's greatest film'. Long-term readers will remember a series called 'The Actors' that it feels timely to resurrect. In support of the BFI's cultural plans, you can expect in-depth articles on François Truffaut, Carl Theodor Dreyer, Nicolas Roeg, Ken Loach, Maya Deren, Bernardo Bertolucci, Soviet sci-fi, Vincente Minnelli and the Russian classics. It all looks very enticing to us – and we hope it will to you.



EDITORIAL

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The February issue is usually the occasion for this column to preview *Sight & Sound*'s plans for the coming 12 months. This year, however, spectacular change has already come. Since we last went to press, the BFI has been given

the responsibility to look after the lottery funding of UK cinema, and to be the main strategic body for the UK film industry.

Talking of classics, the process by which a film can be determined a 'classic' has been the subject of a debate in the letters page. I'm not taking sides here, but one loose rule applied to the BFI Film Classics book series is that a film should be at least ten years old. But though no one can definitively answer Henry K. Miller's question in his letter to *S&S* this month – "How many times do we need to see [the film] before we make the call?" – it is usual to trust in long-term memory as an arbiter.

Such matters have been the seed of bitter literary dispute at least since F.R. Leavis's *The Great Tradition*, so it makes sense to consult a literary opinion. Italo Calvino's introduction to his book *Why Read the Classics?* posits a succession of definitions of the classic, but – finding each one wanting – then refines another to move on to. What follows is drawn from these definitions, but condensed and adapted to film.

Classics exercise a particular influence, both when they first imprint themselves on our imagination, and when they hide in the layers

The process by which a film can be determined a 'classic' has been the subject of a debate in the letters page

of memory. Each re-viewing offers as much of a sense of discovery as the first. Yet even when we see the film for the first time, it gives us a sense of seeing something we've seen before. The films never exhaust all they have to say. They come to us bearing the aura of previous interpretations, and trailing behind them the traces they have left in the cultures through which they have passed. A classic constantly generates a cloud of critical discourse around it, and yet always shakes the particles off. The more we think we know such films through hearsay, the more original, unexpected and innovative we find them when we actually see them. A classic is any film that comes to represent a whole universe; a film on a par with ancient talismans, to which one cannot remain indifferent, and which helps one define oneself in relation – or even in opposition – to it.

That's a tall cocktail, laced with impalpables, and it doesn't solve the 'how long is longevity' problem. But there's enough in there to provoke a deal of future discussion in the months ahead as we get nearer to our 2012 poll. It'll be interesting, too, to see which films of the coming year might measure up.



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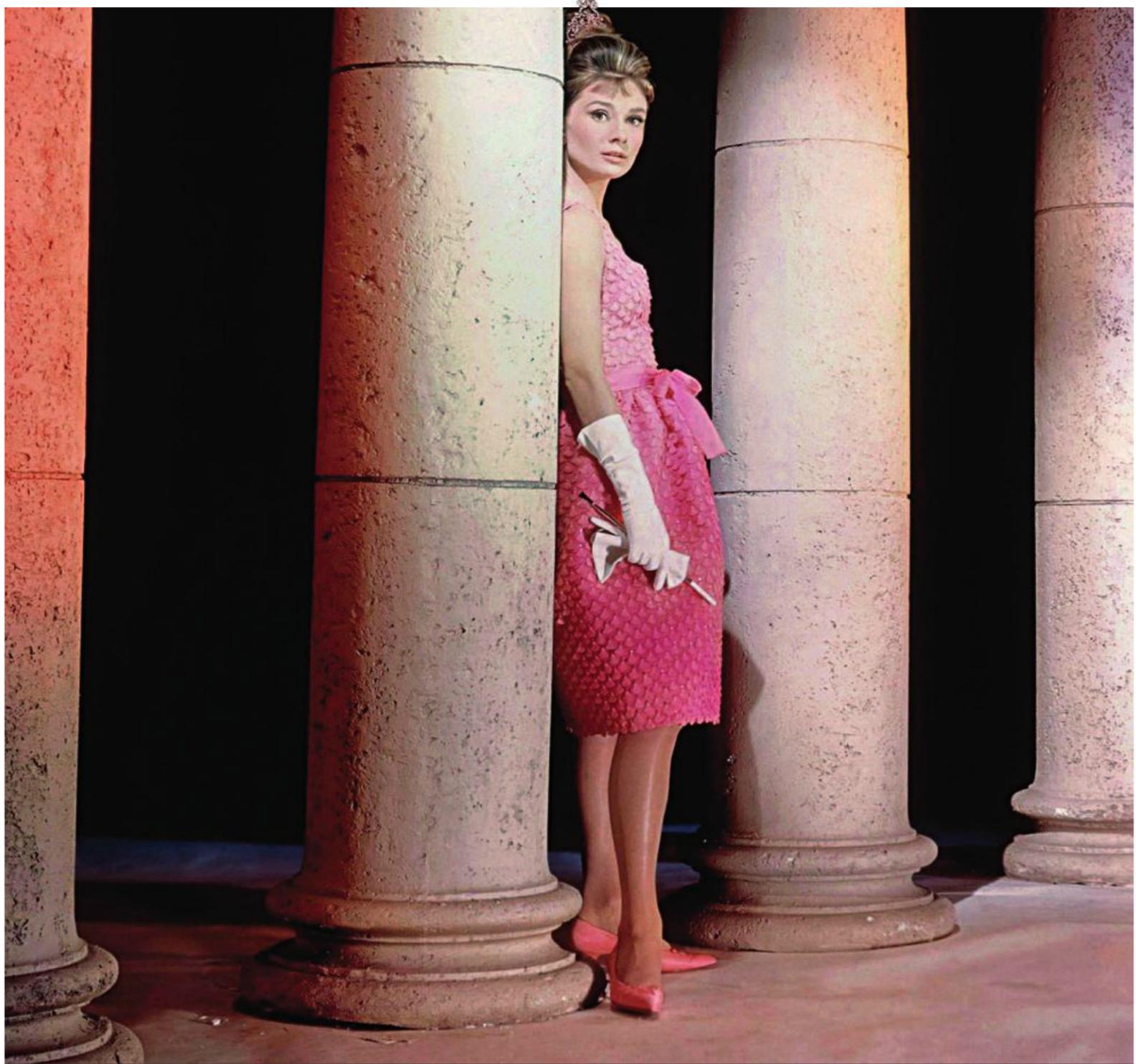
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THE BIGGER PICTURE



Going lightly

Audrey Hepburn's position as a style icon for the ages has often led people to forget just what a luminous, sparkly actress she could be – never more so than as Holly Golightly in 1961's 'Breakfast at Tiffany's' (pictured above). The film – which screens alongside such other classics as 'Sabrina' and 'Roman Holiday' as part of a Hepburn retrospective at BFI Southbank in January, and is also rereleased nationwide –

was directed by Blake Edwards (right), who sadly passed away aged 88 just as this month's issue of S&S was going to press. The story of 'Breakfast at Tiffany's' was of course Truman Capote's, but the film's light-footed wit and charm bore the unmistakable touch of its director – Edwards would bring the same qualities to such comic classics as 'The Party' and the 'Pink Panther' series.



Spirit level

With *'The Portuguese Nun'*, the work of filmmaker and poet Eugène Green finally arrives on UK screens. He talks to Mar Diestro-Dópido

Eugène Green is one of those unusual filmmakers who do not confine themselves solely to film: he's also written novels, poetry, essays about cinema and photography, and directed Baroque theatre and opera. This versatility feeds into the unique worldview and approach of his films, giving them a multi-layered richness that is rare in contemporary cinema. With the release of his most recent film *The Portuguese Nun* – the first of his films to be distributed in this country – UK audiences beyond the festival circuit will at last get a chance to judge his reputation for themselves.

Born in 1947, Green decided to become a filmmaker while watching Antonioni's *Red Desert* at the age of 16. Later, he considered trying to get into the national film school in Paris, but as he says, "I would have been very unhappy if I had got in, because in the 1970s the school was very political: you had to be a Maoist or a Trotskyite, and they only made revolutionary films." In fact it wasn't until Green was 50 that he directed his first film, having until then run his own theatre company, Théâtre de la Sapience. In 2001, Green's screenplay *Toutes les nuits*, a tale of love and friendship loosely based on an early work by Flaubert, won him the financial aid of the *avance sur recettes*, which enabled him to direct the film despite having no experience or training. It was a big critical success in France.

Two more features followed in quick succession: *Le Monde vivant* (2003), a medieval fairytale complete with an ogre and the unforgettably named Lacanian Witch, and *Le Pont des Arts* (2004), a moving portrayal of platonic love. *The Portuguese Nun*, his most fully achieved work to date, develops his preoccupations still further. Present in all of Green's films is a search for the spiritual in the ordinary, accessed partly via the unique sense of human intimacy he creates. Green's very precise understanding of the differences between theatre and cinema sheds light on this search. "Theatre is based on the assumption of its own falsity," he says, "and through that falsity you can express truth. In cinema, the raw materials are always fragments of reality. Whether you shoot a person, a



'To get out of the postmodern rut, I used references to the past. I decided to go backward in order to go forward'

stone or a tree, it has a real material existence in the world. But cinema also enables you to make the audience aware of hidden spiritual energy in the material things that you shoot."

The Portuguese Nun is based on an anonymous 17th-century book of letters supposedly written by a nun in love with a French officer who abandoned her. In the film a French actress named Julie travels to Lisbon to shoot a film based on those letters, in which she is cast as the desolate nun. Wandering through the city's streets, which seem strangely familiar to her, she hears fado music and meets several intriguing denizens of the city, most pertinently a real nun praying in a chapel overlooking the city. This encounter launches her own spiritual quest.

The obvious assumption to make is that *The Portuguese Nun* is a religious film, but in Green's work spirituality does not equal religion. "You find some of the same things in the films of Apichatpong Weerasethakul," Green says. "But he is Thai, and his religious tradition is Buddhism, so he does through Buddhist metaphors what I do through the Judaeo-Christian

tradition... Actually it's all the same sort of thing. In France anti-religious feeling is so strong there's often a very violent rejection of my films. Yet the same people have no difficulty seeing spirituality expressed in Apichatpong's films because they come from an exotic culture. They have nothing against Buddhist reincarnations, Buddhist ghosts or Buddhist monks."

In the case of *The Portuguese Nun*, what we see are parallel lives and plural identities, with three nuns coexisting in the present. "For me, the past and the future are present in the present," says Green. "So you cannot have a future if you have no present, and you cannot have a present if you have no past..."

"One young critic recently told me I had realised that, in order to get out of the rut of post-20th century, postmodern, post-1968 [existence] – to go forward, to go somewhere else, to be able to do things more freely – I used references to the past. And I think that's true. I decided to go backward in order to go forward."

■ *'The Portuguese Nun'* is released on 21 January, and is our Film of the Month on page 44

● Kathryn Bigelow has lined up Tom Hanks to star in her forthcoming film *'Triple Frontier'* (aka *'Sleeping Dogs'*). Details of the film are still sketchy, but it is reportedly a story about crime in the notorious border region between Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay known as *'la triple frontera'*. The film is due to start shooting in March.

● Aoyama Shinji, the Japanese director of the acclaimed four-hour long *'Eureka'* in 2000, will follow the rather less well-received *'Sad Vacation'* (2007) with an adaptation of *'Tokyo Kouen'*, a novel by Japanese author Shoji Yukiya, about an amateur photographer who is hired to follow the girlfriend of a colleague, and who finds that the job begins to affect his relationships with women.

● Chantal Akerman is currently completing the shooting of an adaptation of Joseph Conrad's *'Almayer's Folly'* in Cambodia. The film is the Belgian director's first narrative feature since 2004's *'Tomorrow We Move'*. Conrad's book follows a young Dutchman who has travelled to unstable Malaysia in search of pirate treasure.

● Leonardo DiCaprio (below) is to star in and produce *'Legacy of Secrecy'*, a film about the assassination of JFK, based on a book of the same name by Lamar Waldron and Thom Hartmann, which argues that Mafia godfather Carlos Marcello ordered the hit. DiCaprio is expected to play FBI informant Jack Van Laningham, who went undercover for years, becoming confidant to Marcello.

● Joe Wright, director of *'Pride and Prejudice'*, *'Atonement'* and the forthcoming child assassin story *'Hanna'*, with Saoirse Ronan, Eric Bana and Cate Blanchett (due out in spring), is reportedly considering directing an adaptation of Tolstoy's *'Anna Karenina'* by Sir Tom Stoppard. The film is being developed by Working Title, who reportedly have Keira Knightley top of their wish list to play Anna.



Stepping up

Mexico's Diego Luna talks to Maria Delgado about his debut as a feature director, 'Abel'

The Oedipal tale of a disturbed nine-year-old boy who takes his absent father's place in the family home, *Abel* marks actor Diego Luna's feature debut. Co-written with screenwriter Augusto Mendoza, it's a take on *Hamlet* that combines clear, unsentimental (and at times very amusing) storytelling with cutting observations on fatherhood and masculinity in Mexican society.

Maria Delgado: Your directorial debut 'Chávez' was a documentary about Mexican boxer Julio César Chávez. Is it very different crafting a feature?

Diego Luna: A documentary is an organic way to find your voice as a director. There are no rules. If you realise that you don't have what you need, you can and go back and get it again. Many times you think the documentary is going to be about one thing, and then you realise there's something much more interesting

behind a character or situation. In a fiction film you cannot shoot until you are ready and you know exactly what you want and need.

MD: You've described a first film as necessarily autobiographical.

DL: Every film is very personal, but a first film talks about that step you are making. If you go and see what directors have done as a first film, most of the time it's a coming-of-age film, a road trip, a film about a first kid or a first something.

MD: So where did 'Abel' come from?

DL: It comes from the necessity of talking about who I was as a kid, and the move to becoming a father. It's about the responsibility that means, and the father I want to be. I know this is a cliché, but having a kid redefines the relation you have with your parents – you see them from a different perspective. I wanted to do a film about that. *Abel* is about a kid that comes back home and his father is not there anymore. He needs to become the king and he's not ready.

MD: You have a wonderful central performance from Christopher Ruiz-

Esparza in the title role. Do you think having been a child actor yourself taught you about working with children?

DL: Definitely. I believe there's something a kid can deliver in a film that a professional actor would never be able to do. With young children the line between reality and fiction is not even drawn. It's unbelievable how kids can create images and fantasies. My two-year-old grabs the phone and starts to speak with his grandfather. I go to the phone and no one is there. He needed his grandfather to be there for a little while and he had that conversation, and then he moved on to the next thing. Kids have no problem being watched during this process by others – and that makes them actors.

MD: What has producing work with Canana Films – the company you established with Gael García Bernal and Pablo Cruz – taught you about directing?

DL: Once you have the clarity of what you want to say, why you want to say it and how you want to say it, then it's all about listening. The big difference, I believe, is in those who listen and are willing to be confronted and questioned to get their ideas to a better place.

You need to be humble. The first audience for an actor is a director, and the first audience that a director has is his producer. You shouldn't do films with producers whose point of view you don't trust.

■ *'Abel'* is released on 7 January, and is reviewed on page 46

THE NUMBERS

Language lessons

Charles Gant looks back over the fortunes of arthouse cinema in 2010

In its annual round-up a year ago, this column made a rash prediction: that in 2010 Jacques Audiard's *A Prophet* would overcome its disadvantaged status as a violent, two-and-a-half-hour prison drama with an unknown lead actor and give 2009 hit *Coco Before Chanel* a run for its money at the box office. In the event, such a projection proved wildly optimistic. While the Chanel film played to a broad middlebrow audience, grossing £2.62 million, *A Prophet* maxed out at just over half that number, £1.33 million. Since Audiard's previous biggest hit was *The Beat That My Heart Skipped*, with £568,000, *A Prophet* achieved an impressive result – just not as impressive as some would have wished.

2010 proved a solid year for foreign-language films: nine cleared £400,000, against only six in 2009, in no small part thanks to the three hits provided by the adaptations of the Swede Stieg Larsson's *Millennium* trilogy, which grossed a collective

£4.3 million. Despite the challenge of subtitles, distributor Momentum was able to reach a wide audience, at least for the first two instalments. Grosses dipped on *The Girl Who Kicked the Hornets' Nest* – three movies in eight months was perhaps pushing luck too far.

World cinema may be pulling our attention to all corners of the globe, but France's consistent appeal

has seen it maintain its dominant position, with five entries in the 2010 top ten (see chart). *Heartbreaker* is just the kind of glossy romantic fare that has traditionally proved irresistible at the more accessible end of the arthouse market. Its £702,000 gross is a significant advance on the £476,000 achieved by 2008's similar *Priceless*.

Biopic *Gainsbourg* aimed for the same audience that turned

Foreign-language films at UK box office in 2010

Film	Gross
The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo	£2,157,853
The Girl Who Played with Fire	£1,619,734
A Prophet	£1,331,247
I Am Love	£922,322
The Secret in Their Eyes	£776,833
Heartbreaker	£702,347
Gainsbourg	£599,686
The Girl Who Kicked the Hornets' Nest	£555,331*
Micmacs	£496,589
Leaving	£355,733

Grosses to 12 Dec 2010; chart excludes Bollywood films;

*still on release

English-language arthouse films at UK box office in 2010

Film	Gross
Shutter Island	£10,749,887
The Social Network	£10,368,951*
Up in the Air	£6,516,292
The Lovely Bones	£6,401,466
Green Zone	£5,763,952
Invictus	£4,842,297
The Ghost	£4,086,362
Made in Dagenham	£3,657,808*
A Single Man	£3,185,724
Four Lions	£2,933,360

'Arthouse' is broadly defined; grosses to 12 Dec 2010;

*still on release

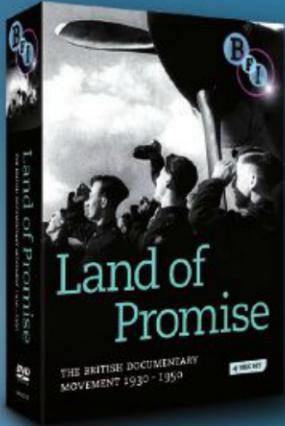
La Vie en rose (£1.63 million) and *Coco Before Chanel* (£2.62 million) into major arthouse hits. But despite a confident presentation by distributor Optimum, Joann Sfar's film lacked equivalent crowd-pleasing elements, and its star Eric Elmosino was a virtual unknown. Given these factors, the resulting £600,000 was a decent number.

The biggest foreign-language hit of the year in the UK – bigger even than *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* – was *My Name Is Khan*, with box office of £2.55 million. This is the biggest ever Bollywood hit here (overtaking 2001's *Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham...*), helped by distributor 20th Century Fox's strategy of targeting younger Asian cinemagoers through trailering with mainstream Hollywood releases.

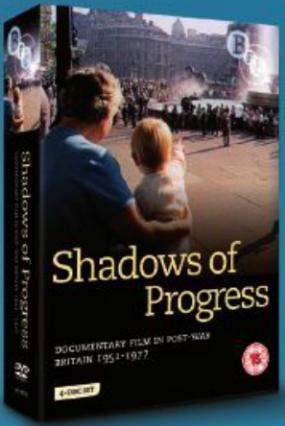
As for 2011, while there are no sure-fire foreign-language hits arriving imminently, arthouse cinemas are nevertheless set for a busy period. *The King's Speech*, *Black Swan*, *Never Let Me Go*, *127 Hours*, *True Grit*, Clint Eastwood's *Hereafter*, *Neds*, *Rabbit Hole*, *Blue Valentine* and David O. Russell's *The Fighter* all compete for audiences and awards attention in the first seven weeks.



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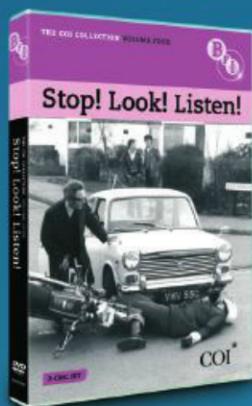


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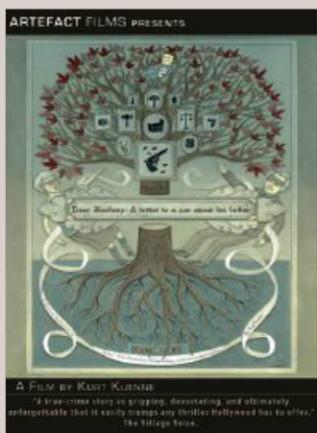
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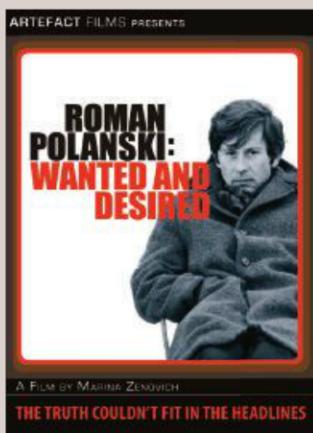
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On 5 November 2001, Andrew Bagby was murdered by Shirley Jane Turner. After being released on parole, Turner flees the US to Canada, where she gives birth to her and Bagby's child, Zachary.

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Enter the void

Jim O'Rourke lauds

Alan Arkin's 1971 directorial debut 'Little Murders', a quintessentially New York story of existential angst

The first time I saw Alan Arkin's *Little Murders* (1971) was in my family's basement, the one place I was sure I would be left alone. I knew little to nothing about it, except that the discontinuity of its title and its reputation as a comedy was enticing. About ten or 15 minutes in, Elliott Gould turns to Marcia Rodd and says – with great apprehension, but also the calm that only a universal truth can bring – that he "hates families". On that day 30 years ago, I knew I'd found the movie for me.

Based on Jules Feiffer's play, *Little Murders* was shepherded into production by star Elliott Gould, with much the same cast as the stage version. The film was the directing debut of actor – and producer, singer, composer, author – Alan Arkin (could I also nominate his second film *Fire Sale* for a future column?). It centres on photographer Alfred Chamberlain (Gould), who has become so uninterested in his life and work that he decides to float through existence, leaving no imprint, never reacting – even to a beating from strangers as the film opens. Instead he just lets life's events pass him by so he can focus all his energies on his consuming passion: taking photos of... well, that would be telling.

Alfred's apathy is in stark contrast to the engaged hyperactivity of his new girlfriend Patsy Newquist (Marcia Rodd). Despite their differences, she introduces him to her family, and they are married by a spaced-out minister played by Donald Sutherland. Their life together, though, is threatened by the fact that their home city of New York has spiralled out of control to become an ultra-violent urban dystopia, where strikes, blackouts and random murders occur daily.

Born on the cusp of the Vietnam War, and with my first memories rooted in the Nixon years, I was vaguely aware of the kind of paranoid culture that seemed to spew forth from entertainment outlets at that time, but became fully acquainted with it in a strange, time-delayed fashion. Before there was cable in Chicago there was 'scramble box' one-channel pay television, and one company in particular showed nothing but the lowest-rental films. Besides *Little Murders*, there was a never-ending cavalcade of American



Still life: Alfred Chamberlain (Elliott Gould) withdraws from the world in 'Little Murders'

negativity in films such as Aram Avakian's *End of the Road* (1969), Stuart Rosenberg's *WUSA* (1970, with Paul Newman), Peter Fonda's *Idaho Transfer* (1973), Robert Downey Sr's *Putney Swope* (1969) and *Greaser's Palace* (1972), among countless others. Downey Sr's films exerted a tremendous influence on me that lasts to this day, but there was always something about *Little Murders* that turned me into a bit of a proselytiser, insisting to friends that it was something they just had to see.

Compared to a film like *Greaser's Palace*, *Little Murders* is easier for some to watch, with roots in recognisably 'normal' filmmaking – something the uninitiated could hang their hats on. Alongside Gould's excellent turn as Chamberlain, the cast includes the wonder of Vincent Gardenia as Mr Newquist – the rather befuddled and paranoid father of Patsy and interrogator of her many would-be paramours – and the amazing dynamo of Jon Korke as Patsy's loving brother Kenny, who has a few problems of his own. Equally appealing is the early-1970s New York flavour that now seems to be lost forever – and which was also essential to the feel of films like *The Taking of Pelham One Two Three* and *Putney Swope*.

The laughs give way to a pointed desperation that you feel in the back of your neck

Little Murders stays close to Feiffer's original play, which had a biting, acid-like sting, and shares that unhinged way of walking the line between cornball and eye-widening dissociation that I loved in the work of Downey Sr or Lenny Bruce. Most of all, the film has that endearing quality of starting off in a not very good place and going downhill from there. Of course, such a progression is not uncommon in drawing-room dramas, but a comedy that starts out having little faith in mankind – and then chooses not to redeem its characters, but instead to push the four walls closer in – doesn't come along all that often.

The film follows an unsettling course to its unforeseen destination. Early on it shows its roots as a stage play, with broad swipes at squares and social mores; but as the underlying sense grows that 'something is going on here', the

laughs give way to a more pointed desperation that you feel not in your gut but in the back of your neck. And yet we continue to laugh. It's a remarkable balancing act that pushes us beyond laughing at what we are afraid of into an almost catatonic state in which we just let things slide past, unable to veer away.

This is not as simple as a careening car without brakes barrelling down the hill (Gould would do that later in *Capricorn One*); there are some truly awe-inspiring off-ramps, and one in particular left an impression with me to this day. I read that the artist Vito Acconci was profoundly influenced and moved by Jack Nicholson's long soliloquy at the beginning of Bob Rafelson's film *The King of Marvin Gardens* (1972), which forms an almost separate short film of late-night radio storytelling, his words sent out into the void. The sequence represents a way to sidestep the screen to speak directly to the audience, without ever acknowledging them. In *Little Murders*, for me that moment comes in Alfred's pivotal central soliloquy, which threatens to split the film in two.

At a moment of crisis for themselves and their relationship, Alfred calmly and intently tells Patsy of his days in college when he was politically active and began to fear that he was being monitored for his participation in demonstrations and other political work. Feiffer takes this confessional down very unexpected roads, reaching a conclusion that is both bitingly cold and alarmingly revealing. Up to this point Alfred has seemed almost to be an empty vessel, ignoring the advice of those who tell him to engage with the world and find some meaning in his life. As he tells the story of his earlier 'engaged' life, he shows that he in fact has much more profound insights into the true meaning of his relationships than those who feel they are pulling him out of the water.

Dark clouds gather, the anti-*deus ex machina* descends and the film teeters on the brink of stifling its momentum or turning on its ear – in such a way that, as we move from spectator to confidant and back again, we realise not only that our narrator is much more reliable than we'd thought, but also that he is totally alone in his understanding of everything around him and everything he has chosen to ignore. And that includes us. Jim O'Rourke is a musician, record producer and filmmaker. His albums include 'Bad Timing' and 'The Visitor'. He recently composed the score for Wakamatsu Koji's 'United Red Army'

What the papers said



"[Little Murders] falls somewhere within the category of satire... One of the reasons it works, and is indeed a definitive reflection of America's darker moods, is that it breaks audiences

down into isolated individuals, vulnerable and uncertain. Most movies create a temporary sort of democracy, a community of strangers there in the darkened theater. Not this one. The movie seems to be saying that New York City has a similar effect on its citizens, and that it will get you if you don't watch out."

Roger Ebert, 'Chicago Sun-Times', January 1971



Pop-video aesthetic: 'Attenuated Shadows' reworks 1983 glue-sniffing film 'Illusions'



Hymn to progress: 1979's 'Inkjet Printer', directed by Peter Greenaway

Cautionary tales

Rob Young surveys the golden age of the public-information film – and its recent twisting into haunting new forms

The past couple of years have seen the great British costume drama move closer to the present, with Shane Meadows's *This Is England '86*, Channel 4's adaptation of David Peace's *Red Riding* and others. As examples of mainstream drama attempting to show the 'darker side' of British life in the 1970s and 80s, they achieved their purpose; but other memories are being dug up across the fields of film reissue and experimental music.

The latest in the BFI's exemplary DVD repackages of Central Office of Information (COI) films, *Stop! Look! Listen!* compiles health-and-safety films from four decades, concentrating on the golden age of such shorts in the 1970s and early 80s. Some of these have become greatest hits in their own right: *Lonely Water* (1973) surely spooked the collective memory of an entire generation of viewers, with the Grim Reaper (voiced by a calmly psychotic Donald Pleasence) hovering around a river bank to preside over a variety of chilly child deaths. *Apaches* (1977) was screened mainly in rural areas, disseminating a ludicrously hyperbolic homily about farm safety, in which a small troop of precocious kids gets picked off by being drowned in a slurry pit, smashed by a plough, crushed by a runaway tractor etc.

There's a degree of realism to these films that stems from the unvarnished domestic and roadway locations shot with available light,

the semi-professional actors and school-age extras, yet these factors often jar against the stilted scripts. It's 'accident porn' with inbuilt grisliness; tension is continually set up with the most banal of scenarios – a suburban house, a commuting husband on his way to work, farmhands innocently loading a cart with hay bales. But we know that some atrocious hazard is fast approaching, and that someone is going to end up on the tarmac with ketchup trickling from his or her ear.

All this has made for ripe pickings for certain British musicians, such as the 'hauntology'-minded Ghost Box label, Moon Wiring Club and others. The enigmatic Pye Corner Audio also taps into this era of public-information films with analogue synth pieces – that strange juxtaposition of pagan modernism, half-baked and not-yet-user-friendly digital technology, all teak-veneered computers and throbbing menace. And the De Wolfe Music Library label has just issued a collection of classic television and radio themes from 1960-82, including those from hoary old daytime favourites like *Seeing and Doing*, *Farmhouse Kitchen*, *Vision On*, *Crown Court* and *Roobarb and Custard*. Ghost Box artist Jon Brooks, meanwhile, has just released *Electronic Music in the Classroom* on his Café Kaput label, a selection of plangent synthesiser miniatures made mostly by children in the 1970s under the supervision of teacher D.D. Denham.

What links all this material is a propensity for the morbid and the uncanny, and the discomfiting sense – as in classic British sci-fi/horror such as the *Quatermass* films, *Village of the Damned* or *Night of the Demon* – that unruly forces are bursting to

break through the veil of modernity. This *unheimlich* notion is the key to another BFI DVD, *Misinformation*, credited to COI + Mordant Music. Here British electronic musician Baron Mordant (real name undisclosed) was granted the run of the COI's vast time-coded VHS archive and invited to "scroll, trawl, stumble, wind, rewind and generally pratfall across some of the wonderfully diverse films", as the BFI's Tony Dykes puts it.

Mordant's sawtooth synths are a signature scrawled across many of the 14 selected films (all of which have been retitled for this reissue). On *Mindless Reverie* (originally titled *Magpies: House*, 1987) – an anti-burglary advert in which a flock of thieving magpies ransack a house – the effect is hypnotic. The new soundtracks beef up the weirdness: the teenage glue-sniffers in *Attenuated Shadows* (aka *Illusions*, 1983) stare into handheld cameras in a trope common to pop videos, while the plastic bags of solvent held to their mouths bulge and convulse like extra organs. Apart from running the famous *AIDS: Iceberg* (1986) backwards, Mordant leaves the visuals untouched, but transplants sampled chunks of soundtrack across this and other films. So *A Dark Social Template* (aka *New*

New soundtracks beef up the films' weirdness... Shots of barrows vibrate to a drilling drone

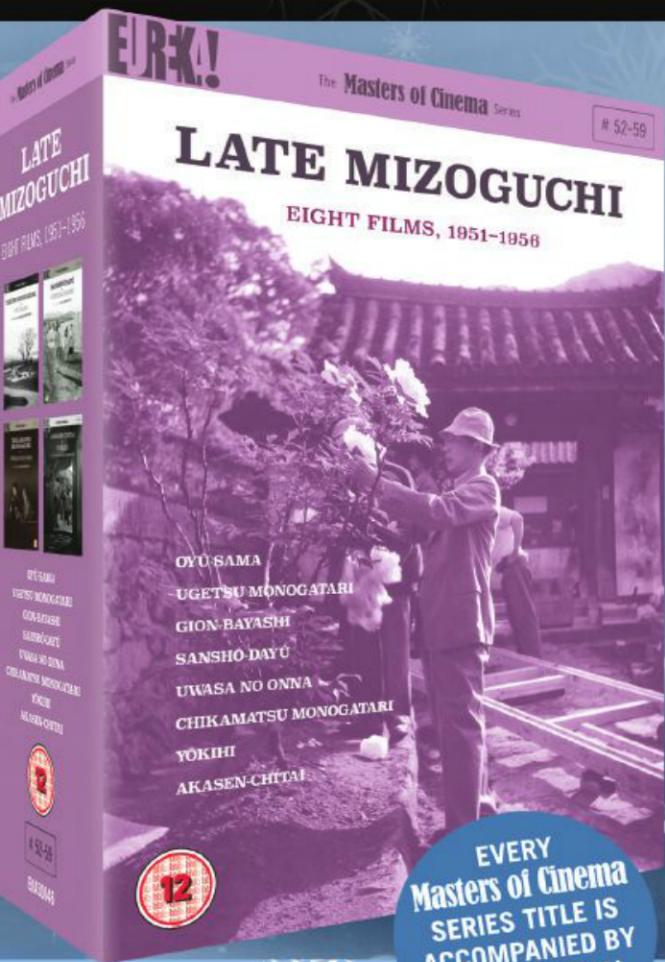
Towns in Britain, 1974) carries subliminal messages like "Your child is at risk" over its optimistic footage of lakeside housing estates, while a voiceover about the spread of fungus spores accompanies the science-lab visit in *Black and White Sound* (aka *Culham Labs*, 1984).

At the other end of the scale, the brilliant *Ridyll* (aka *Looking at Prehistoric Sites*, 1982) plays things fairly straight: misty winter long-shots of stone circles, burial chambers and barrows (the bits labeled in gothic type on Ordnance Survey maps) vibrate to a drilling yet reverential drone that speaks to the monuments' agelessness. A Morris Marina might chunter past, or a cagouled band of archaeologists appear on the hill, but these are temporal will-o'-the-wisps; deep cosmic time mocks the temporary creations of man.

Most of Mordant's choices are not 'warning' films but video hymns to technological or social progress. The Sinclair pocket TV, rapturous close-ups of an inkjet printer (filmed in 1979 by Peter Greenaway) and lovingly built scale models of new housing projects – mini-Utopias destined to become sink estates – are pieces of living memory whose ingenuity has been superseded by advancements or dilapidation. Mordant's sonic treatments emphasise the remove at which we now observe – perhaps even mourn – these lost innovations. For at their root all these films, including those on *Stop! Look! Listen!*, are concerned with the death of innocence.

■ 'Misinformation' and 'The COI Collection Volume Four: Stop! Look! Listen!' are out now on BFI DVD

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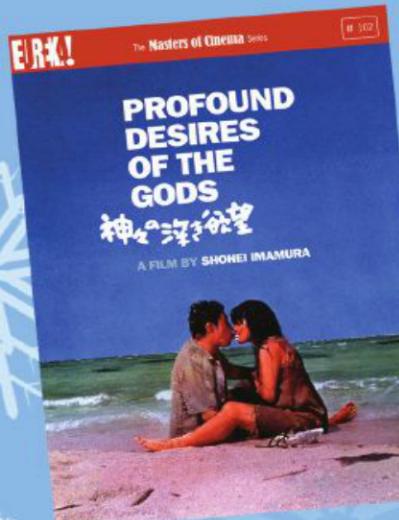
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T-SHIRTS AND OTHER APPAREL INSPIRED BY THE LOVE OF GREAT FILMS

Hooked on Hollywood

One of the less headline-grabbing WikiLeaks revelations – perhaps because it seemed so self-evident – was that David Cameron sent pre-election messages to the Obama administration to the effect that, this time, there was going to be lots of Mr Nice Guy. The new government would be (even) friendlier to the US, buying plenty of US-made things (like weapons systems) and generally looking across the Atlantic before looking across the Channel.

The country as a whole was, in other words, going to be just like the movie industry, where that behaviour has prevailed throughout most of the last decade (and, in certain respects, forever). The result? American product accounts for 85 per cent of the market. Precise statistics are not that easy to come by, since the UK Film Council – the main statistical source – has spent a decade muddying the distinction between US and UK films, counting such studio-financed movies as the Harry Potter series as UK productions because they were, for tax purposes, registered in the UK. As a result, 'our' share of 'our' market looked much bigger than it really was. Then, in a classic case of having your cake and eating it, 'inward investment' on such productions was entered into the credit column, showing just what a healthy film industry we had. As if.

Statistical sleight-of-hand aside, none of this is new: it has been part of the British film industry's USP since the dawn of cinema. The last serious attempt to reverse the trend – the short-lived import quota proposal – is now over half a century old. But of course it still rankles (a verb in which older readers might like to spot some wordplay). Imagine if, every Saturday, tiny crowds wrapped up warm to watch footballers in home-made strip playing in local parks across the land while the big stadiums housed sell-out crowds watching American gridiron. Or, as Ken Loach said in his keynote speech at last autumn's London Film Festival: "Just imagine if you went into the library and the bookshelves were stacked with 63 per cent to 80 per cent American fiction, 15 per cent to 30 per cent half-American, half-British fiction, and then all the other writers in the whole world just three per cent."

This is something the present government is no more likely to change than its predecessors. Its economic policies – including much-reduced support for the arts – coincide with the country's pro-American stance (rather one-sidedly



The government's economic policies – including much-reduced support for the arts – coincide with its pro-US stance

described as the Special Relationship) and its wariness (if not hostility) towards our neighbours in Europe. A case in point is the Council of Europe-backed film support scheme Eurimages, subscribed to by 34 of the COE's 47 member states. Guess who isn't a member (and is the only significant absentee, having been taken out by John Major in 1993)?

You might think that, with the EU larger than the North American Free Trade Agreement (the US, Canada and Mexico) as a population base (500 million against 444 million), only slightly smaller as a consumer market (22 per cent against 26 per cent) and built around a free-spending bureaucracy dedicated to preserving national ways of life (French farmers, Portuguese cork growers), Europe would be gaining and not losing strength as both a supplier and a consumer of its own cultural product. After all, the MEDIA Programme – *Mesures pour encourager le développement de l'industrie audiovisuelle* (although I prefer Measures to Encourage the Development of Interesting Acronyms) – devotes €750 million to helping this happen (admittedly that doesn't sound like much these days).

But Europe hasn't gained strength in this regard because, to be blunt, there is no such thing as a European film. As a result, there is nothing called 'European cinema' to rival 'Hollywood' as a brand. Hollywood, after all, is a marketer's dream – a brand so freighted with meaning it can embrace television game shows and the film industries of any country whose name can be melted into it (Bollywood, Nollywood). In Europe, by contrast, there are French

films, German films, Italian films, Icelandic films... But there aren't any European films as such.

I need to hold my hand up here: I have been involved in one way or another – through the European Film Academy – with the idea of European film for over a decade. And I want to believe in European film. I accept that, broadly, there is a kind of film that seems native to Europe. It usually consists of drama (*The King's Speech*) rather than action (*The Expendables*), character rather than genre. But sometimes it is action too. And sometimes genre. Being more specific is difficult.

It's much easier to say what characterises French cinema or Spanish cinema or Russian cinema, above all at a particular moment in time – especially if that moment is in the past: think French New Wave, Romanian new wave, New German Cinema, Italian neorealism. And that, really, is the point. Unless you're looking at it from the perspective of a different culture (I doubt Americans have any difficulty spotting a European film, mainly because it's got words written across the bottom) or a different time period, European film remains simply itself, not part of a trend or a brand. Which is good cultural news but a bad commercial proposition. Only those countries that combine a major population base with a distinct culture – India, Japan, increasingly China – can produce films in which, to paraphrase Hanns Zischler's character in Wim Wenders's *Kings of the Road*, the Americans haven't colonised our subconscious. And, of course, cornered our markets.

– Nick Roddick

● **Curzon On Demand** is a new service launched by the Curzon Artificial Eye group to stream new films online simultaneously with their release in Curzon cinemas. Once ordered, viewers have up to seven days to watch the film. The scheme launched in December with Mathieu Amalric's 'On Tour' and Brian Welsh's 'In Our Name'. See www.curzoncinemas.com for more details.

● **The Long Goodbye: A Cinematic Memento Mori** is a season exploring cinema's treatment of death and time passing in films such as Leo McCarey's long-overlooked masterpiece 'Make Way for Tomorrow', Kurosawa's 'Ikiru', Jacques Demy's 'Une Chambre en ville' and Cristi Puiu's 'The Death of Mr Lazarescu'. Season curator Geoff Andrew also hosts a talk on the subject. BFI Southbank, London, until 29 January.

● **Ben Rivers**, the British artist and filmmaker, screens his intriguing new film 'Slow Action' at Matt's Gallery this month. Described as post-apocalyptic science-fiction, it was filmed at various places across the world and constructed from four 16mm works. Continuing his fascination with landscape, ecosystems and biogeography, it imagines the earth as it may appear in 100 years time, when sea levels have risen. Matt's Gallery, London, 26 January to 20 March.

● **Capturing the Invisible: Spirituality in Cinema** is a season of films that touch on themes of spirituality and faith, including Robert Bresson's 'Diary of a Country Priest', Maurice Pialat's 'Sous le soleil de Satan', Apichatpong Weerasethakul's 'Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives' and Alain Cavalier's 'Thérèse' Ciné Lumière, London, 17-29 January.



● **Slapstick Festival 2011**, now in its seventh year, celebrates Chaplin's Little Tramp and hosts a screening of Buster Keaton's classic short 'Neighbors'. Other films showing include Clara Bow in Victor Fleming's 'Mantrap', Laurel and Hardy's 'We Faw Down', Chaplin's 'One A.M.' and Harold Lloyd's 'Get Out and Get Under' (above). Various venues in Bristol, 27-30 January. See www.slapstick.org.uk.



NO COUNTRY FOR YOUNG GIRLS

It's the western's turn to get the Coens treatment, but the brothers' makeover of the John Wayne Oscar-winner 'True Grit' is free of their usual self-consciousness, says Graham Fuller

One hundred years before Ed Tom Bell (Tommy Lee Jones), the ageing sheriff who laments the passing of the safer Texas of his youth as he expresses intimations of mortality in Joel and Ethan Coen's *No Country for Old Men* (2007), there was Deputy Marshal Reuben J. 'Rooster' Cogburn, a lawman who lived by a different ethos in a more retributive West. A fictional character modelled on such late 19th-century lawmen as Heck Thomas, Chris Madsen and Bill Tilghman, Cogburn is the deputy marshal in Charles Portis's deft semi-historical novel *True Grit*, a frontier equivalent of *Huckleberry Finn* with a business-minded adolescent girl as its hero instead of an unmoored youth.

Unlike Bell, Cogburn is pragmatic about the necessity of killing, and has shot 23 men in his four years in office. John Wayne, of course, won his only Oscar playing the fat, one-eyed, whisky-soaked Cogburn in Henry Hathaway's 1969 adaptation of *True Grit* (and donned the eye patch again for a 1975 follow-up named after the character). Following the realist westerns of the 1970s and ➤

AN EYE FOR AN EYE
Jeff Bridges, right, follows in John Wayne's footsteps as Rooster Cogburn in 'True Grit', remade by the Coen brothers, above left





The Coens do not elicit actorly shtick from Bridges, as in 'The Big Lebowski', or reference his own iconography – growl, bark and lumber though he does

such milestones of the diminished genre as *Unforgiven* (1992), *Dead Man* (1995), the TV series *Deadwood* (2004-6) and *The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford* (2007), the Coens' new version of *True Grit* is inevitably the more reflective, violent and realistic version of the two – and a film untouched by the self-consciousness the brothers have brought to such genre makeovers as *Barton Fink* (1991) and *The Hudsucker Proxy* (1994).

The story is the same in both films. In the burgeoning West Arkansas town of Fort Smith – from where, in reality, the reluctant hanging judge Isaac Parker purged the region of its murderers, rapists and robbers – the hard-bargaining 14-year-old Mattie Ross (in the Coens' film, the redoubtable Hailee Steinfeld) hires Cogburn to hunt down Tom Chaney (Josh Brolin), the employee who killed her father. Against Mattie's wishes, they team up with the dandyish Texas Ranger LaBoeuf (Matt Damon), who's seeking Chaney for the killing of a senator. Then they follow the fugitive into the rugged Choctaw Nation in the south-eastern part of the Indian Territory (modern Oklahoma) – a "sink of crime", as it's called by the horse trader Stonehill in Portis's novel – where he has joined train-robber Ned Pepper (played by Barry Pepper) and his grimy white-trash crew.

Whereas Hathaway's film drew unashamedly on Wayne's monolithic image, the Coens do not elicit actorly shtick from Bridges, as they did in *The Big Lebowski* (1998), or reference his own sizeable iconography – growl, bark and lumber though his Cogburn does. Their mythmaking is integrated into the narrative, though by the end Bridges's Cogburn is a legend only to one woman, a couple of old men and the film's viewers, like Wayne's Tom Doniphon in *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962).

Some people in the preview audience with whom I saw the film in New York laughed when Cogburn's name was referred to, before he appears, as the meanest deputy marshal in Fort Smith – less anticipation for what Bridges would do in the role, perhaps, than acknowledgement of what Wayne had done 41 years before. The Coens introduce him quietly, but with great power. As pigtailed Mattie enters the courtroom where Cogburn is giving evidence on his decimation of the homicidal Wharton clan, the camera tracks behind a row of men so that we get fleeting glimpses of him seated alone, before it moves imperceptibly closer, ending on a medium shot. It reveals not the vagabond he is much of the time, but a watchful, sceptical citizen neat in black, his beard trim, his hair slicked back. His sober, blunt testimony – which he interrupts with a single laugh at the expense of a surviving Wharton's defence counsel – shows how efficiently lethal he is when dealing with murderers. The impression he leaves is of a far more ruthless man than Wayne's piratical Cogburn, which makes his gradual amelioration by the fatherless Mattie more moving than that of Wayne's Cogburn by Kim Darby's Mattie in Hathaway's film.

Into strangeness

A director of tough westerns characterised by spasmodic violence, Hathaway was more than the journeyman he is sometimes made out to be, but he

O SISTER WHERE ART THOU?
After her father is killed, Mattie Ross (Hailee Steinfeld, right) hires Deputy Marshal Cogburn (Jeff Bridges, above with Matt Damon) to track down the murderer



wasn't a consistent auteur like John Ford, Howard Hawks or Anthony Mann. His *True Grit*, solid and conventional, was anchored by Wayne's loveable curmudgeon, capably supported by Darby (more school-marmish than girlish) and Glen Campbell as LaBoeuf – with Robert Duvall, Dennis Hopper and Jeff Corey among the outlaws. It was blessed by the autumnal cinematography of Lucien Ballard, who shot another 1969 western, Sam Peckinpah's *The Wild Bunch*, the bloody *götterdämmerung* of which makes Cogburn's mounted two-gun charge on the outlaws seem like a walk in the park – heroic act of a superannuated Missouri bushwhacker though it is.

In adapting Portis's novel for Hathaway, the once-blacklisted Marguerite Roberts preserved the snake-bitten arm Mattie loses in the book and killed off LaBoeuf; the Coens sacrifice the arm and keep LaBoeuf alive, though he disappears (as he does in the novel) after discharging his duty. Roberts honoured much of Portis's sublime frontier dialogue – which ranges from the ornate to the cretinous – but stripped the narrative of the novel's naive, didactic and scripture-sprinkled monologue, which Mattie delivers as a 40-year-old churchgoing spinster and ardent Democrat looking back on the defining adventure in her life.

The Coens restore this crucial framework with an introductory voiceover and a coda, set in 1903, in which the older Mattie (Elizabeth Marvel) seeks out Cogburn at the Wild West show that in real life starred the retired outlaws Cole Younger and Frank James. At the end of Hathaway's film, Mattie invites Cogburn to rest in her family's burial plot when his time comes; in the Coens' film (as in the novel), her feelings for him are more complicated than those of a grateful daughter, or of the "baby sister" he affectionately calls her, but she remains unaware of their nature. That unfathomable emotion is central to the movie's key mystery.

But mysteries abound. Having been deserted temporarily by LaBoeuf (who, though a fellow Southerner, was offended by Cogburn's having fought with Quantrill's murderous raiders during the Civil War), Mattie and Cogburn find themselves riding a sparsely wooded trail, the deputy marshal regaling her with tales of his lawless past and his desertion by his wife and son. (When Wayne's Cogburn tells Darby's Mattie these stories they have a bathetically sentimental lilt.) They are soon confronted by the sight of a man dangling from a bough some 60 feet from the ground. Who he is and why he was hanged is never disclosed. Mattie, who has already seen three men take a legally sanctioned drop in Fort Smith, gives only a momentary start at this fresh example of frontier justice. Cogburn is naturally unfazed and continues with an anecdote as he sends Mattie shinning up the tree. She cuts the rope, the bough jolts, nearly dislodging her and, from her dizzying perspective, we see and hear the corpse hitting the ground with a loud thump. (Remember that jolt – the teenager is plucky but small, and later the kick of her father's huge Colt Dragoon, which she fires at Chaney, knocks her backwards into a pit of hell.)

"I do not know this man," Cogburn says on examining the corpse, and as viewers we're inclined to smile at his incredulity after Mattie's gone to all that trouble. It's the second example of



FOLLOWING THE TRAIL

The Coens' bleaker take on 'True Grit' has more in common with their own 'No Country for Old Men', right, than with the original 1969 'True Grit', left, starring Kim Darby, John Wayne and Glen Campbell

literal gallows humour in the film. Whereas the two white men on the scaffold in Fort Smith were allowed to say their pieces before they were hanged, the Indian beside them was silenced with a hood and dispatched before he could complete a sentence. The Coens similarly brought this bleak comedy to *Fargo* (1995), to parts of *No Country for Old Men*, and to their film noirs, *Blood Simple* (1983) and *The Man Who Wasn't There* (2001). Neither the body with the ruined face lying on the ground beside Cogburn nor the doomed Indian is funny *per se*, but both provoke nervous laughter, because Cogburn's response is so incongruous and the hangman's racism so matter-of-fact.

We might laugh more freely at the scene in which Cogburn knocks an Indian boy off a hitching rail and kicks his small brother in the backside for tormenting a mule (clearly he would do the same if they were white). This incident indicates that the gruff old man is essentially compassionate – earlier he cocked a revolver at LaBoeuf for taking a switch to Mattie, the first indication that he is developing a fatherly protectiveness towards her – but it has an additional effect. These Indian boys live in a rough timber outpost, not a teepee, and their plight looks as miserable as those of the reservation Sioux in Yves Simoneau's mournful HBO film *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* (2007), condensed from Dee Brown's seminal account of the despoliation of Indian lands. Despite the establishment of law and order in towns like Fort Smith, the wider world of *True Grit* is pitiful: the Civil War, 12 years over, has populated the West with riff-raff; the "big shaggies is about all gone," says Cogburn, regretting the passing of the buffalo; the Indians have been displaced. Mattie's guide to this world in flux, Cogburn too is marking time – he lives in the back of a Chinaman's store with a cat and nothing except his professional pride.

The Coens came up with the scene of Mattie cutting down the corpse (it's not in the novel) and

follow it with a sequence, also their invention, that steers the movie into strangeness. An Indian comes along, his face unseen, and relieves them of the body, parts of which – clothes? teeth? – have trading value for him. A gun booms, the Indian's warning to Cogburn and Mattie. They wait – and we wait with them – for what seems an age. A bear approaches on horseback in the falling snow – actually an old white man with a bear's hollowed-out head on his head and its fur wrapped round him. Heavily bearded, like a mountain man, with an insane look in his eyes, he claims to be a dentist and mumbles that he has medicine to sell. Then he's gone. He could have stepped out of the dystopic West of *Dead Man* or Cormac McCarthy's novel *Blood Meridian*, but he's less the phantom he seems to be than a genuine crazy, typical of those who must have ridden the land in which Cogburn's real-life antecedents moved. Another madman is an outlaw in Pepper's gang – common to Portis, Hathaway and the Coens – whose only utterances are maniacal gobbles and squawkings. He is a throwback to the degenerates in *Dirty Little Billy* (1972) and the inbred Cleggs in Ford's *Wagonmaster* (1950). Such is the West.

The traditional western revived a little over the last decade with films like *The Missing* (2003), *Open Range* (2003), *Broken Trail* (2006), *Seraphim Falls* (2006), the *3:10 to Yuma* remake (2007), *September Dawn* (2007), *Appaloosa* (2008) and *Comanche Moon* (2008). Only *The Assassination of Jesse James* and the Coens' *True Grit* are putative classics (though Kelly Reichardt's upcoming feminist pioneer drama *Meek's Cutoff* breaks new ground). Like the great twisted tree trunk that Mattie passes as she leaves the scaffold in Fort Smith – and like Rooster Cogburn in his cups – the western lies close to the ground, but it's somehow immovable.

“I like characters having odds stacked against them,” says Danny Boyle. “I love that dynamic.” For a director who refuses to make the same film twice, that preference might be the closest we have to a Boyle archetype. *Trainspotting*’s Renton is addicted to heroin “right in the middle of an [HIV] epidemic”, but somehow pulls through. Likewise the protagonist in *28 Days Later...* (2002) manages to avoid the rage-inducing virus that has ravaged the population. In *Sunshine* (2007), an astronaut must reignite the sun – “a pretty tall order,” laughs Boyle – while the director’s last film, the Oscar-winning sensation *Slumdog Millionaire*, sees an uneducated Mumbai teen outwit a popular game show.

Still, nothing compares to the odds faced by Boyle’s latest character, the first real-life one in his films: Aron Ralston. Adapted by *Slumdog* writer Simon Beaufoy from Ralston’s 2004 book *Between a Rock and Hard Place*, *127 Hours* tells of the 27-year-old climber’s excruciating five-day ordeal after he went hiking in Utah’s Bluejohn Canyon. Having told nobody where he was planning to hike, Ralston wound up stranded in a crevasse, pinned to its wall by a rock that fell on his right arm. What happened next has already entered modern folklore: Ralston somehow contrived to cut off his own limb with a blunt penknife.

For the 54-year-old Boyle, the story presented a double dilemma. First, how do you convince financiers (in this case *Slumdog* backer Pathé and its distributor Fox Searchlight) to bankroll a movie with such a fundamental yet grisly scene? And second, how do you construct a film with such a well-known outcome without it completely overshadowing the narrative? For Boyle, the success of *Slumdog* – with its \$377 million take at the global box office and eight Oscars, including Best Director and Best Picture – was key; that’s a language Hollywood understands. “You have a certain amount of power after a success like that,” he says.

Boyle claims he didn’t want to abuse the cachet *Slumdog* gave him, but instead use it to get “an unfilmable story” made. “I thought the big danger



Never one to repeat himself, Danny Boyle follows his exuberant ‘Slumdog Millionaire’ with the bare-bones one-man show of ‘127 Hours’. **James Mottram** talks to him

GRACE IN THE HOLE



I got involved with 'Alien Resurrection' at one point, years ago. I realised, 'That's not the kind of filmmaker you are'

was that the studio would want to change it," he says, though he credits executives for not pressuring him into watering down the gruelling amputation scene. Calling Ralston's description of the incident "an extraordinary piece of writing", Boyle admits he didn't want to rush the scene, since in reality it took the climber over 40 minutes to sever his arm.

"These are amazing machines we live in," says Boyle. "They're not that easy to change, like he had to in the circumstances. It does involve a series of levels of pain, which are very uncommon to men, especially." Wary of turning the film towards exploitation, Boyle claims he took care not to "sensationalise" the sequence or "push it into horror" – so much so the camera refuses to linger over the severed stump when Ralston finally cuts his way through.

Boyle's restraint didn't stop audience members from fainting at the film's world premiere in Toronto in September. "I've been at a few screenings where that has happened," says Boyle. "That's wonderful, in a way. It shows the empathy with James [Franco, who plays Ralston in the film] is intense. It's not like being at a horror movie, where you're so appalled that you just flee it. It's like a pop concert when you're a teenager and it all gets a bit too much for you." Of course this only adds to the film's notoriety, something Boyle admits is a worry. "If all the publicity surrounds this one scene, it distorts the film really."

Chain of connection

Indeed, as the title suggests, *127 Hours* is about far more than a man cutting off his own arm. As the rush-hour crowds in the split-screen opening credits hint, it's really about the idea that "we're part of a chain that we're all connected to" – something Ralston innately comes to understand during the course of his ordeal.

"I was obsessed with it being about people," says Boyle. "There's an amazing quote from Cormac McCarthy, in which he says that grace is the thing that has the power 'to heal men and bring them to safety long after all other resources are exhausted'.

And what grace is, is humility – and that's what you get. Aron makes that spiritual journey after realising what he's been like to people."

In the film such insights come via the videotaped messages Ralston recorded during his ordeal – some of which Beaufoy's script uses verbatim – lamenting his all-too casual relationships with parents, friends and lovers. Still, whatever Boyle says, *127 Hours* is really about one person – and that person can't move, a fact that presents remarkable problems for a director. Even Robert Zemeckis's *Cast Away* (2000) – another largely one-man show – allowed star Tom Hanks to walk about the island he's stranded on. Boyle has dealt with isolation before – not least in *28 Days Later...*, in which Cillian Murphy's protagonist wanders a deserted London. But here Ralston's predicament is such that Boyle has no option but to depict his character's crumbling interior. Recalling Renton's surreal cold-turkey sequence in 1995's *Trainspotting* (with a baby crawling on the ceiling and a fake Dale Winton-hosted game show), here we see Ralston endure wild hallucinations as a consequence of dehydration, with a giant inflatable Scooby-Doo and an appearance by Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid's chef Blue John preying on his mind.

While Franco deserves credit for holding our attention for so long, so does Boyle for bravely filming a virtually plot-free narrative that boasts about as much momentum as the boulder wedged on Ralston's arm. Which begs the question, why does Boyle so rarely get the credit he deserves? As Hannah McGill pointed out in her review of Amy Raphael's *Danny Boyle: In His Own Words* (S&S, January), the director has "never been regarded as a chin-stroking visionary with a back catalogue firmly stamped with unmistakable idiosyncrasies". Perhaps because in his nine films to date he's worked across multiple genres, both inside and outside Hollywood, and with a variety of writers and producers, he is seen as the very antithesis of the auteur.

As shown by his fruitful relationship with screenwriter John Hodge and producer Andrew

Macdonald – which stretched from their feature debut *Shallow Grave* (1994) to *Trainspotting*, *A Life Less Ordinary* (1997) and *The Beach* (2000) – Boyle is a true collaborator. Unlike the pre-fall Ralston, he can't operate in isolation (his adaptation of Alex Garland's paradise-lost tale *The Beach*, for instance, led to a subsequent collaboration with the novelist, who scripted *28 Days Later...* and *Sunshine*). Arguably it's Boyle's need to feel connected to others that accounts for his ability to nail the zeitgeist, as he has in at least two of his films – *Trainspotting* and *Slumdog Millionaire*.

Yet on the other hand, he's not a Hollywood storyteller either. "I'm not very good at those kinds of films," he says. "I know enough about myself to know they're not really my forte. Why do something that you're not very good at? I've had a couple of flirtations with it – once with *The Beach*, which was much more money than I normally work with, and I didn't enjoy the experience. It was no one's fault but my own. But it's silly to not learn. And I got involved with *Alien [Resurrection]*, eventually directed by Jean-Pierre Jeunet] at one point, years ago. Again I realised, 'That's not the kind of filmmaker you are.'"

So what kind of filmmaker is he? One who at the very least is unafraid of experimentation. This month also sees the opening of his debut at London's National Theatre, where he is directing Nick Dear's new adaptation of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, which tells the story from the Creature's point of view. Then Boyle will turn his attention to the 2012 Olympics. In charge of directing the opening ceremony, he promises "a more intimate spectacle" than the one Beijing delivered at the last Olympics. But he also wants to "reinforce" the function of the ceremony: "to welcome these games and these athletes – this extraordinary connection of the whole world – to the city". If anything, this ambition sums up Boyle – a 'people's filmmaker' in the best sense of the word.

■ '127 Hours' is released on 7 January, and is reviewed on page 70. 'Frankenstein' opens on 5 February at the Olivier Theatre, London

OUTWARD BOUND
James Franco as Aron Ralston in '127 Hours', right and facing page, the new film from Danny Boyle, top



Reader offers

COMPETITIONS

MIZOGUCHI KENJI: Three box-sets to be won

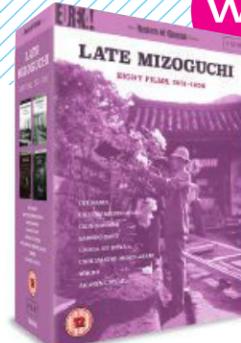
Eureka! present 'Late Mizoguchi' – eight of the Japanese filmmaker's greatest works in one fantastic collection. The box-set includes: *Oyū-sama* (1951), a poignant tale of two sisters and their ill-fated relationship with the same man; *Ugetsu monogatari* (1953), the acclaimed lyrical tragedy about

men lured away from their wives; *Uwasa no onna* (1954), about a mother and daughter living in a modern geisha house; and the film Kurosawa hailed as a great masterpiece, *Chikamatsu monogatari* (1954), the tragic story of a forbidden love affair. We have three sets to give away.

To be in with a chance of winning, please answer the following question:

Q. What was Mizoguchi's final film?

- a. Akasen-chitai
- b. Shin heike monogatari
- c. Yokihi



WIN

BFI FILM CLASSICS:

Three sets to be won

The latest in the BFI Film Classics series sees *Bringing up Baby*, *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, *Night and the City* and *Shoah* added to the list. Each book provides a comprehensive study of the films, exploring such contexts as the American dream of independence (*Bringing up Baby*), post-war modernity (*Invasion of the Body Snatchers*), the hybrid of contrasting American and European *noir* traditions (*Night and the City*) and Holocaust representation (*Shoah*). We have three sets to give away.

To be in with a chance of winning, please answer the following question:

Q. In the 1978 version of 'Invasion of the Body Snatchers', who does Don Siegel play in a cameo?

- a. A taxi driver
- b. A chef
- c. A policeman



WIN

MILOS FORMAN:

Three copies of 'A Blonde in Love'

Miloš Forman's Oscar-nominated 1965 romance *A Blonde in Love* is released by Second Run on DVD, a tender drama of a Czech girl who falls in love with a musician after a one-night stand. With the backdrop of Communist Czechoslovakia, this comedy-drama is also a social satire of life under totalitarianism. We have three copies to give away of this and Forman's debut feature that launched the Czech new wave – the documentary *Audition/Talent Competition*.

To be in with a chance of winning, please answer the following question:

Q. For which one of these films was Miloš Forman nominated as Best Director at the Academy Awards but did NOT win?

- a. One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest
- b. The People vs. Larry Flint
- c. Amadeus



WIN

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JR Books' latest additions to their showbiz biographies are of screen legends Judy Garland and Diana Dors. In *Judy Garland: The Other Side of the Rainbow*, author Michael Freedland reveals several personal stories from those who knew Garland, highlighting the immense pressures she felt throughout her life-long career.

In *Diana Dors: Hurricane in Mink*, author David Bret uncovers Dors's rise to stardom, her lavish lifestyle and the dark truth of the blonde bombshell's personal life.

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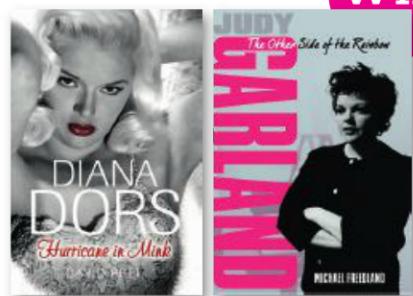
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Email your answer, name and address, putting either 'Mizoguchi collection', 'Miloš Forman DVDs', 'Garland & Dors books' or 'BFI Film Classics' in the subject heading, to s&competition@bfi.org.uk. Or send a postcard with your answer to either 'Mizoguchi collection competition', 'Miloš Forman DVDs competition', 'Garland & Dors book competition' or 'BFI Film Classics competition'; Sight & Sound, BFI, 21 Stephen Street, London W1T 1LN.

The deadline for all competitions is Tuesday 15 February 2011

Q. Which one of these J. Lee Thompson films did NOT star Diana Dors?

- a. The Weak and the Wicked
- b. Yield to the Night
- c. The Good Companions



WIN

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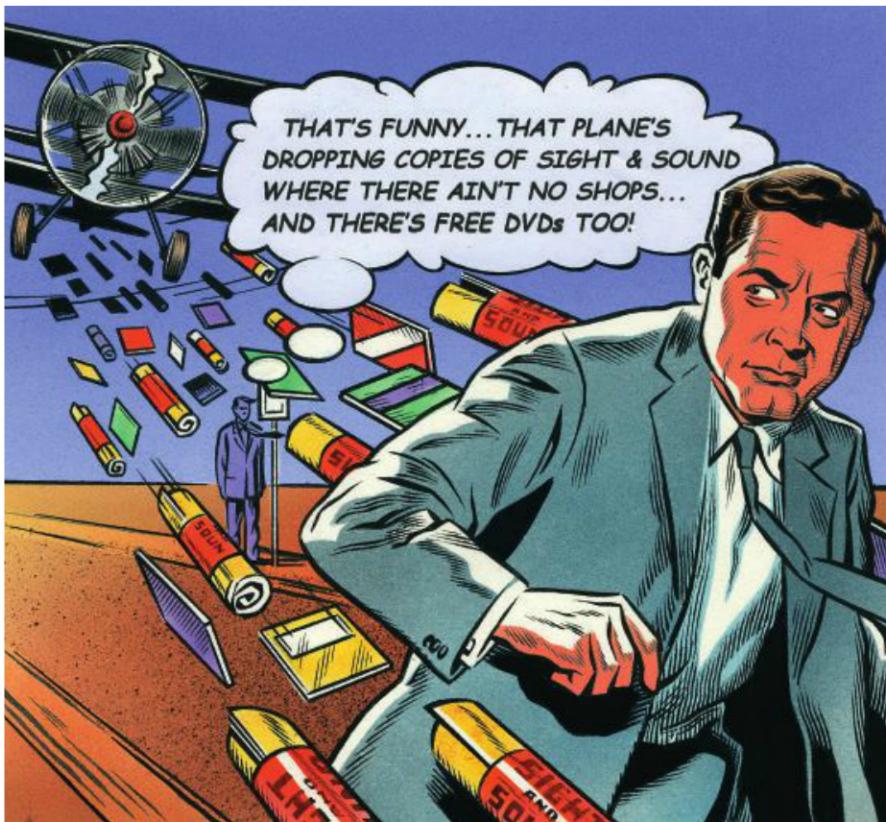


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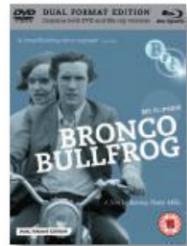
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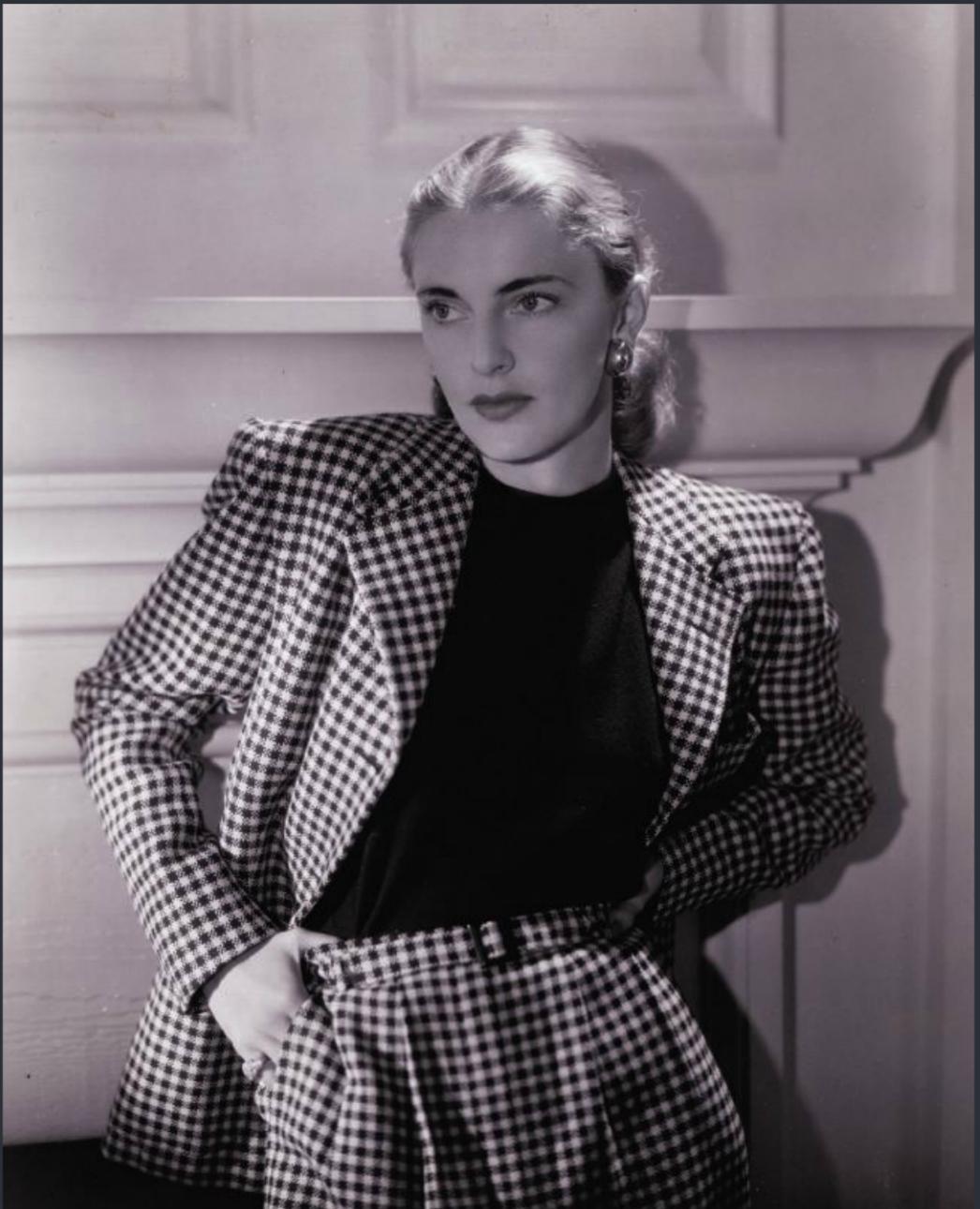
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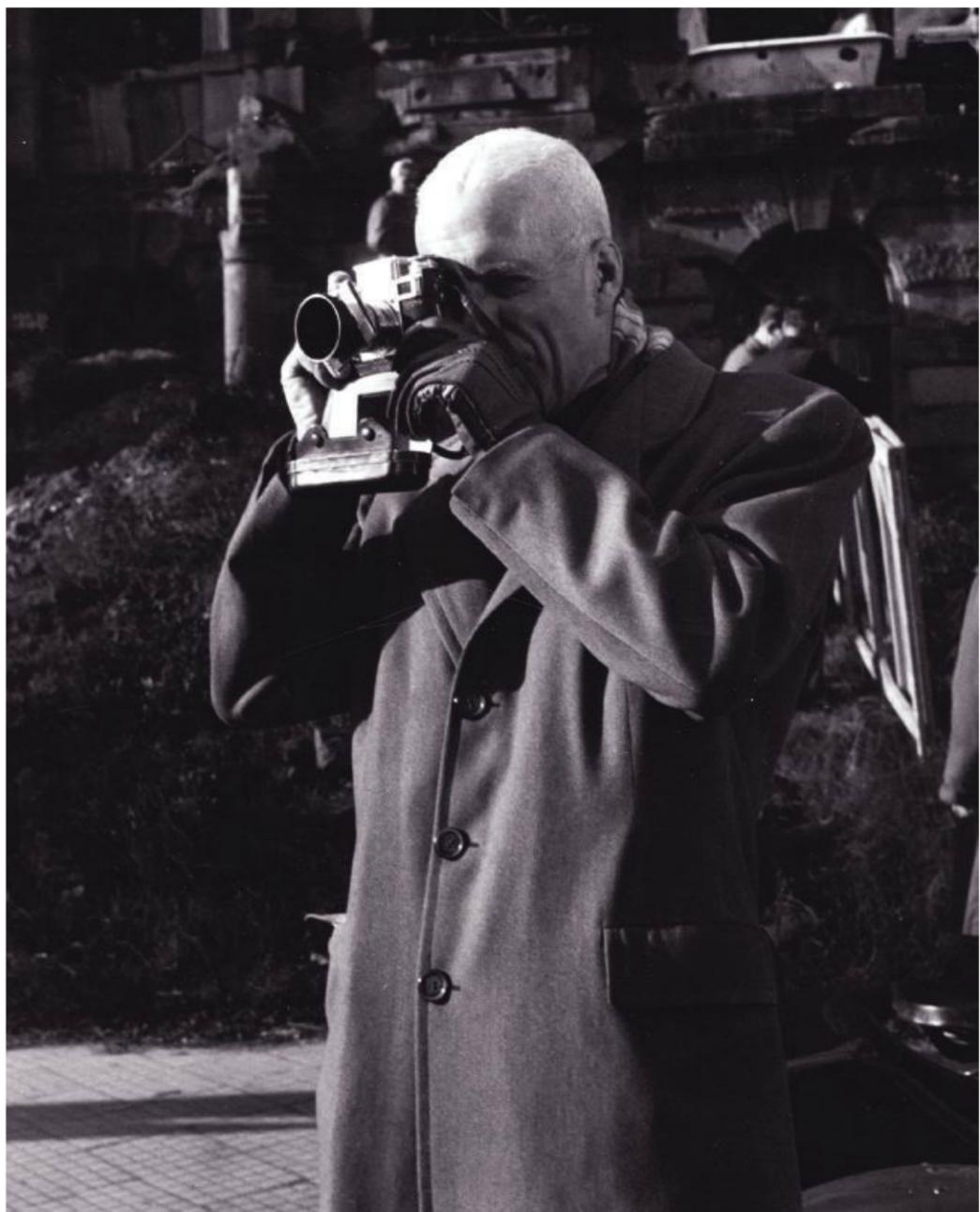
SLIM

HIS GIRL FRIDAY
Nancy 'Slim' Hawks,
right, the second wife
of director Howard,
opposite, provided the
model for the look,
attitude and smart
dialogue of the female
characters in his films



The years Howard Hawks spent with his second wife Nancy – aka ‘Slim’ – were the richest of his film-directing career, as her style and influence inspired him to live out a recurring dream of their relationship on film. By **David Thomson**

AND THE SILVER FOX



The Slim years were very rich. You may decide they were the best in the career of Howard Hawks. In which case doesn't his wife Slim Hawks deserve some credit? We are talking about 1939 to 1946, which means: *Only Angels Have Wings*, *His Girl Friday*, *Sergeant York*, *Ball of Fire*, *The Outlaw* (he started it before Howard Hughes dropped him), *Air Force*, *Corvette K-225* (which he produced), *To Have and Have Not*, *The Big Sleep* and *Red River*, which was shot in the autumn of 1946, though not released until 1948. Not a bad war.

Nancy Gross met Howard Hawks on 30 August 1938. She was 20; he was 42. She was born in Salinas, California – *East of Eden* country – and her father owned several fish canneries in Monterey. She was extraordinarily beautiful and a convent girl, but when the time came, adventure took her to the Furnace Creek Inn, a classy resort in Death Valley, not far from the Nevada border. There she met movie stars: William Powell (he called her the “Slim Princess”), Warner Baxter, David Niven, Cary Grant. Next thing, she was invited to San Simeon and became friendly with William Randolph Hearst and Marion Davies. Very soon she was in Los Angeles. On that August day, she had been to the fights with two men – actor Bruce Cabot (“seriously dumb”, she said) and Cubby Broccoli (“truly intelligent”). After the boxing they went to the Clover Club, the most fashionable gambling nightclub in town.

She was dancing with Broccoli when a tall, grey-haired, immaculately dressed man passed by – it was Howard Hawks, just a few months off *Bringing up Baby* (a flop in its day). He was known as the ‘Silver Fox’, and he was watching her. Watching would prove to be Howard’s most loving form of attention. He asked her to dance and then he gave her the usual line: so, she wanted to be in movies? “No,” she said, and she meant it – though in the end she would affect Hawks’s work more than any other woman. Hawks kept a little black book with the names and numbers of pretty women who



Lauren Bacall's 'Slim' in 'To Have and Have Not' wore a beautifully cut hounds-tooth suit exactly like the ones Slim Hawks favoured

did want to be in pictures, and he called on them sometimes. He asked Nancy to come up to his house for a swim next day, and she accepted. They were soon in love.

Hawks had been married since 1928 to Athole Shearer, the sister of Norma Shearer and Douglas Shearer, the sound recordist at MGM. It was Athole's second marriage (she had a son, Peter, by her first husband). But Athole was not always well. Norma would say that her sister had first been disturbed by so many Canadian guys they had known (they were from Montreal) being killed in the Great War. Athole was depressed. She took to her bed. She heard voices or ghosts.

Athole was very pretty and she appeared in a few films; she's at the dance in D.W. Griffith's *Way Down East* (1920). In 1927 Norma Shearer married Irving Thalberg, so Hawks's marriage to her sister saw him joining Hollywood society. His biographer Todd McCarthy is properly sceptical of the suggestion that Howard didn't know about Athole's condition. They had two children, Barbara and David, but by the time Howard met Slim he told her his wife "was ill a great part of the time". What did "ill" mean, especially when California law forbade the divorcing of certified spouses? Athole's illness had not gone that far.

You may feel this is more gossip than film commentary, but the way Howard Hawks looked at women, or fantasised them into movie life, is at the heart of his work. Athole Hawks lived until 1985, spending much of her last years in institutions. On Wikipedia she is said to have been "bipolar", but that diagnosis came along later and is fashionable now to the point of stupidity. It's clear she was disturbed some of the time (but not all of it) – and a husband's infidelity can assist that. We know that Hawks had affairs – with Ann Dvorak and Joan Crawford, for example – and it's evident that he was in the habit of 'discovering' young women as radiant as Frances Farmer.

Hawks gave us some of the most arresting women in American film – beautiful, smart, brave and seemingly 'independent', yet ultimately

obedient to the man's dream. In *His Girl Friday* (1939), Hildy Johnson (Rosalind Russell) is on the point of marrying someone else, but her ex, rascal newspaper editor Walter (Cary Grant), wins her back. These women are often loners, like Marie 'Slim' Browning (Lauren Bacall) in *To Have and Have Not* (1945), who contrives somehow to be alone on Martinique in the middle of war, under the guise of an actress no more than 19. This 'Slim' is a million miles from Hemingway's Marie in the novel, and famously Hawks warned Humphrey Bogart that Bacall would outdo him in insolence. Well, yes, if it's cross-talk foreplay you're interested in (and Hawks was wild for it), but the girl's independence dwindles away until she's ready to soft-shoe dance out of Frenchy's place and go with her Harry into the new dawn.

To Have and Have Not comes on sultry tough, and we all know the film's famous lines, with Bacall holding up a doorway in case it faints. It's a film with marlin fishing, gunfire at sea and creepy Vichy cops (especially Dan Seymour), but it's as complete and serene a fantasy as anything Fred Astaire ever made – and it does keep edging towards being a musical, led by the droll Cricket (Hoagy Carmichael). For a moment Bacall had the reputation of a slinky *noir* girl with an acid tongue.

Of course, this is the central film of the Slim years. There is, by now, an unshakeable legend (and I'm not seeking to dislodge it) that, one day at home, Slim saw a picture of a pre-Bacall Betty Joan Perske in *Harper's Bazaar* – the fashionably dressed young woman outside a blood bank, with the look of a vampire – and tossed the magazine over to Howard. Maybe as the magazine was in mid-air the wife had second thoughts. Did she guess that Howard might take a fancy to her discovery? But Slim Hawks had great instincts about film, and perhaps she divined Perske's promising look when Howard might not have seen it.

The movie was under way from that moment, and the machinery of Hollywood's dream surged into high gear. Betty Perske was located. She was put under a personal service contract to Howard



HOWARD HAWKS PAPERS, BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY (T)

CHANGE PARTNERS
The Bogart-Bacall relationship in Hawks's 'To Have and Have Not', top, was modelled on the director's own relationship with Slim, above, who later left him for agent Leland Hayward, below



CORBIS/OKORO COLLECTION (T)



KOBAL COLLECTION/ALAMY

FIELD OF BATTLE
Hawks films such as 'Only Angels Have Wings', above, and 'His Girl Friday', left, follow the same template of sparring between the sexes

and taught to lower her deep voice. (Her Jewishness was tactfully overlooked by the Hawks couple.) As a script developed – for which Jules Furthman didn't bother to keep a word of Hemingway – the man in the film would call the girl "Slim" and she would call him "Steve".

These were the pet names Howard and Nancy had for each other. Hawks started to ask Slim what she'd say in certain of the film's situations – Furthman admitted he took some of the lines from Slim's lips, like the whistling stuff. Moreover, 'Slim' in Martinique ended up wearing a beautifully cut hound's-tooth suit exactly like ones Slim Hawks favoured. A rare game was being played, good enough for a Hawks comedy, in which a director is ready to fall for his actress, but keeps his wife around to pretend it isn't so. When Bacall and Bogie fell in love, Howard was taken aback. He said their romance was spoiling the picture. Try to find a place where that is so! Bacall burst into tears; Slim said, "But what do you do, Howard, if you're stuck on a guy? How do you handle it?"

Slim knew that difficulty. She had been torn over living with Hawks in 1938-9 and recognising the awkward reality of Athole (whom he finally divorced in 1940). But she went along with the compromise. She found Hawks not just sophisticated and dry, but a complicated man who tried to make everything as smooth as his camera style.

"If anything, he was slightly frightened of moviemaking, and, I suspect, surprised that he was able to do it at all," she recalled in her memoirs, *Slim: Memories of a Rich and Imperfect Life* (written with Annette Tapert, and published in 1990, the year Slim died). "He used to tell me that on the first day of shooting a new picture he would stop the car, get out, and throw up a couple of times on his way to the studio. That process would go on for about a week until he got into the rhythm of the work and the movie started rolling along..."

"Although his talent lay in being able to tell a story," she continued, "it always seemed to me that he told the same one over and over. The characters never had any intellectual reactions, only

emotional ones. This always puzzled me because as a person, Howard's emotional thermometer was stuck at about six degrees below 98.6. He was frozen there. He did not take emotion into any part of his existence; neither through his children, his wife, nor, I think, his work."

Now that's film commentary.

Sex on the screen

Slim and Howard married and had a daughter, Kitty Steven, born in 1946. Hawks had more affairs – Slim named Dolores Moran (who plays the Free French wife, Helene de Bursac, in *To Have and Have Not* – the woman 'Slim' would like to anaesthetise); then there was Ella Raines, who is in *Corvette K-225*. But Slim was restless too. She and Ernest Hemingway certainly noticed each other, and in 1946 she started an affair with the agent Leland Hayward – but not before Hayward had brought his new client Montgomery Clift over to see Hawks about playing Matthew Garth in *Red River*.

Clift was not keen on doing a western, so Slim took him for a walk in the garden. He told her he couldn't ride a horse, wear a six-gun or walk in funny boots. She said Howard and John Wayne would teach him those things (though the task actually fell to a wrangler named Richard Farnsworth). When they came in from the garden, Clift said, sure, he would do it. The shoot took off for Arizona, but Slim went with Hayward.

So Slim's years stretch from Cary Grant teasing Jean Arthur in *Only Angels Have Wings* (1939) to *Red River*'s Joanne Dru, who starts off with Clift by slapping him in the face. In the middle there is the timeless screwball bickering of Bogart and Bacall, perhaps the sexiest talk in an American movie to this day. Hawks could do a two-shot of a man and a woman – with her rubbing at her knee (call it her lower thigh) and him telling her to scratch – that any halfway sane censor would have stopped. And Slim presided over such relationships and scenes, though she saw the colder side of Hawks that was hidden on screen. She also realised why he had been at the Clover Club that night: he was a

chronic gambler. (No one knows the inside story of Hollywood without understanding the gambling.)

"I don't know which was more unpleasant, Howard's gambling or his infidelity," Slim wrote in her memoirs. "Beneath that jaunty exterior, I think there was a great deal of sexual confusion and insecurity within Howard. When I look at the role of sex in his films and compare it with his life, it's very interesting. The love scenes in the movies are invariably the same. There's a terrible fight, the woman insults the man, he insults her back, she insults him again, and then suddenly they're in each other's arms and slashing round in the hay. This scenario was, I think, a way for Howard to put sex on the screen that didn't make him want to gag. In his own life, he had a very tough time with tenderness or sentimentality. Even at the height of our courtship he was a tentative partner. Sex was simply a physical need that had no relation to the person he was with."

Red River was to have been the making of them. In the Slim years Hawks had prospered. With hit after hit his salary rose; *Red River* was his own production, and he hoped to clean up. But the expenses on the picture got out of hand, and then Slim left him for Leland Hayward. Hawks's salary was deferred against profits on the film, and the profits weren't declared for a few years. The divorce was a long-drawn-out financial quarrel in which Hawks resisted paying child support for Kitty.

As Todd McCarthy puts it: "Hawks's behaviour in relation to Slim and Kitty is hard to fathom, although it certainly stemmed from some combination of arrogant stubbornness, a conviction that he needn't pay since Leland Hayward and Slim had far more money than he did, a lack of liquid cash and a lingering resentment of Slim for having left him. Relations between the two were strained when they existed at all, and Hawks undoubtedly knew that Slim bad-mouthed him to her show business and society friends. Slim remained very close with Bacall, Bogart and Hemingway, whereas Hawks did not." Bogart may have known how much Hawks went after Bacall; Hemingway could



FORK IN THE TRAIL
'Red River' marked the launch of Montgomery Clift's career – and the end of Slim and Howard's marriage, when she left him for Clift's agent

■ not forget that his most political novel had been turned into an airy fantasy.

But the new Hawks season may be the occasion for a reappraisal. There was a time when it was stressed how Howard Hawks had flown planes and driven fast cars – how he made films about men doing a dangerous job with laconic professionalism. There was a suggestion of realism. In fact he re-enacted a dream, with hard-boiled dialogue and allegedly blunt confrontations. Laconic was like italic. He made absurdist, floating comedies (*The Discreet Charm of the Cowboys*, perhaps, with the herd never reaching a railhead?) in which men pretended to be strong and the women challenged them and then subsided. It's like *Rio Bravo* (1959), where Angie Dickinson tells John Wayne not to mess up her life with his preconceived notions, talks him into a heap of wet laundry, but ends up guarding his door and wearing tights for him.

By the time I met Slim she was no longer slim, but she was great fun and a storyteller, who gave not the least hint she was dying. I got to see her by sending her a piece on *Red River* written for this magazine (in 1977) – a serious, heartfelt essay, though it did realise that the strenuous cattle drive was usually the same valley shot from different angles. Slim thought Howard would have liked the piece – he admired admirers. She was fond of him again by then, I think, though he was dead.

Then, gently, she tried to explain the kind of man Howard Hawks was: talented, cold, a fantasist, a gambler. I believe that is film commentary, and an insight into how American films functioned once upon a time. I doubt Hawks liked being laughed at in life, but he was a fabulous poker-faced comedian who dreamed the same dream over and over again – in which a man and a woman play word games and then decide they are in love. Until the next picture. The reason Walter has lost Hildy in *His Girl Friday* is to permit the fun of winning her back again.

■ A Howard Hawks season plays throughout January and February at BFI Southbank, London

ALMOST AMOROUS

Michael Mann on why he loves Howard Hawks, and in particular the 1932 gangster classic 'Scarface'

PARTNER IN CRIME
In his most recent film 'Public Enemies', right, director Michael Mann, below, revisits the style and era of Howard Hawks's 1932 classic 'Scarface', top right, which stars Paul Muni as Tony Camonte and Ann Dvorak as his sister Cesca



Howard Hawks's *Scarface* has a special significance for me because [producer] Marty Bregman called me up, probably in 1982, and asked was I interested in doing a remake. I'd seen the original in film school, and I watched it again and thought, "This movie is so brilliant I can't possibly think what would make me want to redo it, or how I would redo it." That was before he had the much better idea of setting it in Miami with Cuban immigration, and got Oliver [Stone]'s fantastic screenplay and made a brilliant movie. So I've loved Hawks's movie for a long time.

The particular moment that has a lot of resonance for me is at the end of the film when the police are arriving and Tony Camonte is in his apartment. His sister Cesca shows up with a gun, because Tony has killed her husband and lover, and so she enters the scene seeking revenge. The scene is a little micro-classic within a larger classic, and what's so stunning about it is the total dialectic of the film form and content and the way everything is choreographed with such precision that it becomes universal. It stands up today – you would light the film the same way.

Tony's in the room and has the lights turned off. There are harsh streetlights outside, a very linear white light coming in through all of the windows, casting these very deep shadows. Streetlights used to be that way in the 1920s, 30s and 40s, before sodium vapour and diffused lights – I remember as a small child the way streetlights used to be this very linear, high light. So there are these hard shadows, and they also back-light all the curtains. Cesca comes in and walks right into one of these hard lights – it's a very brutal light that's hitting her. She has a gun in her hand – she's come to kill him – and she's caught in this direct streetlight.

Then we hear police sirens, and Tony is in jeopardy. Her emotion shifts to alarm for Tony, and she says, "They're coming," and drops the gun and runs to him in the centre of the room, where there is no light. The two of them are in this profile, and they're in a kind of umbra – a pool of shadow, somewhere between half-tone and dark, between shadow and total darkness; they're framed there and it's almost like they're in a separate realm when they enter that zone of half-light – and that's the realm in which they have their love for each other. There's a suggestion that he has this savage protection of her that's almost amorous – suggestive of incest, with those kind of complexities – and that's the realm where the private emotions between this brother and sister exist.

All of those choices – the lighting, where they stand in a room, where they walk, how she walks out of the harsh light into the centre where there's no light, and the mood that's around them – are quite perfect. It's an exquisitely choreographed dialectic of film form and emotion, and the history of these characters and the story between them. It's one of those things that you analyse, and the act of analysis is already false, because the perfection of the organic unity of what's going on there – and how that impacts upon you – is so consummately elevated. That's Howard Hawks to me at his best.

Maybe Hawks had been influenced by Murnau, as many in Hollywood had been at the time, and



REELSTILLS, POSTERS, AND DESIGNS (2)

What's so stunning is the way everything is choreographed with such precision that it becomes universal

was moving the camera and was interested in deep shadow from seeing German expressionism in cinema and its impact on Hollywood. But it doesn't really matter to me – the historical origins of this, or why he was interested in that, or who he was building off – because we all build on work that's come before us. It's just a really stunning moment of artistry and storytelling.

I don't know that I could have worked in the studio system in the way he had to, but another

view is that what Hawks wanted to do coincided with what the public wanted to see and what the studios wanted to make, and that's a fortunate convergence of intents. He's too good in his best films for it to be somebody who is conforming and not doing exactly what he wanted to do – he's too in love with what he's doing. I say that because the best work comes from that authentic sense that you love doing this thing, and that's why you're good at it. You can't be that good at it unless you sincerely have the impulse to be doing exactly that – and Hawks is that good. The way that system operated, I think that a lot of directors of my generation from the 1970s and 80s would have had a lot of difficulty – though I think some directors from this decade would have been very comfortable in the studio system.

As to whether anything in my own films is especially influenced by Hawks, I could answer that in a different way and say that there are a couple of things in my films that I probably wish had been influenced by Hawks but were not! The dialogue – his facility with that, inventing it to a certain extent, but also working with great writers: on *Scarface* there are four writers listed, including Ben Hecht and W.R. Burnett, who's brilliant.

Lauren Bacall and Humphrey Bogart's *double entendres* in *The Big Sleep*, when she's talking about saddling up, come to mind. She says to him, "What do you usually do when you're not working?" And he says, "Play the horses." She says, "Well, that figures" – I'm paraphrasing. Then she says, "You like to get out in front, open up a little lead, take a

little breather in the back stretch and then come home free." It's just these amazingly overt sexual *doubles entendres*.

I've certainly appreciated – either collaterally or driving from Hawks – that sense of using all of the modalities of expression in storytelling, in the sense that you write the movie many times: you start with the screenplay, then you write it with light; the final mix is the final authoring of the picture – not just the sound, but when all of everything is together at the same time. The ability of a beam of light hitting a bit of fabric to generate a mood or an ambience in a powerful scene that's not dialogue-driven necessarily, but is driven by expression or gesture, and the music that's playing with it – all of that.

You asked if I see a kinship between my films and Hawks's in terms of a focus on groups of professional men. Actually I don't, because when I've had those kind of thematic concerns, I don't extol professionalism for its own sake. [For me] it's a little bit different: I am very interested in the struggles that people make under very arduous circumstances to live authentic lives, or lives they define in an authentic way as the lives they want to lead. I've always been very interested in that struggle, going back to *Thief* in 1980, so if there is a thematic concern, that's mine – it's not to extol professionalism for its own sake. At the same time, when I'm attracted to a subject, I'm usually attracted to people who are quite good at it.

■ Michael Mann was talking to James Bell



Disney, the studio whose name was once synonymous with animation, has lost its edge. As 'Tangled', its 50th film, is released, **Andrew Osmond** asks what went wrong

DISNEY AFTER DISNEY



This February marks a minor anniversary for fans of animated feature films. The Oscar ceremony will be the tenth to include a category for Best Animated Feature. The first winner, in 2002, was the Dreamworks studio's *Shrek*, a barbed parody of the Disney tradition. Over the following years there have been five wins for Pixar; one win for Britain's Aardman Animations (*Wallace & Gromit in the Curse of the Were-Rabbit*, 2005); one for Japan's Studio Ghibli (*Spirited Away*, 2001); and one for George Miller's dancing-penguin epic *Happy Feet* (2006).

Over the same period, Disney released nine 'canonical' cartoon features, supposedly part of the series that began with *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* in 1937 and continued through *Fantasia* (1940), *Sleeping Beauty* (1958) and *Beauty and the Beast* (1991). The Disney films of the noughties began with excursions into sci-fi (*Atlantis the Lost Empire*, 2001; *Treasure Planet*, 2002); they moved into CGI (*Chicken Little*, 2005; *Bolt*, 2008); and they made a brief return to drawings and fairytales in 2009's *The Princess and the Frog*. None of them won the Animated Feature Oscar.

Let's repeat that: none of this century's films from Disney, the studio that defined animated features, won the Best Animated Feature Oscar. Few came close, with the exception of *Lilo & Stitch* (2002), a quirky girl-meets-alien piece with a solid dramatic core. As reviewer Glen Kenny noted, it was the first Disney animation with lines like: "The social worker's gonna be here any minute."

Last year, *Lilo*'s directors Chris Sanders and Dean DeBlois released another much praised animated film, the CGI adventure *How to Train Your Dragon*, which grossed nearly half a billion dollars worldwide. But it wasn't by Disney; Sanders had creative differences with the management, so he and DeBlois went to the rival Dreamworks studio. Seasoned Disney-watchers had seen it before. Sometimes it seemed that the most interesting filmmakers in animation had all at some point quit or been fired from Disney: Don Bluth (who went on to make *An American Tail* for Spielberg in 1986); Brad Bird (*The Iron Giant* for Warner Bros, 1999; *The Incredibles* for Pixar, 2004); and Henry

Selick, who left Disney, then made films for it (*The Nightmare Before Christmas*, 1993) and for other studios (*Coraline*, 2009).

Another Disney exile was John Lasseter, now the most famous figure in Hollywood animation thanks to his pioneering CGI work at Pixar from *Toy Story* (1995) onwards. In 1982 Lasseter was hired as a young animator at the Disney studio, which had been waning since Walt's death in 1966. Roy O. Disney, Walt's brother and financial champion, had overseen the studio until his passing five years later; subsequently the leadership went to Ron Miller, Walt's son-in-law.

For some fans, the 'real' Disney died with Walt, though his studio had changed drastically since the 1940s, when Walt lost much of his interest in animation and turned to other media. (The first wholly live-action Disney feature was *Treasure Island* in 1950; Disneyland came five years later.) The hubris and adventure in *Snow White*, *Pinocchio* (1940) and *Fantasia*, and the seemingly effortless balancing of cuteness, wit and wonder in *Dumbo* (1941), were mostly gone by the end of World War II. Lasseter himself thought the studio reached a "plateau" with the urbane canine comedy-thriller *101 Dalmatians* (1960). "Somehow I felt that the films after that, while they had wonderful moments and characters, they were just the same thing," he has said.

Hybrid possibilities

In 1982, the year Lasseter came to Disney, the studio released the computer fantasy *Tron*. Enthused by the possibilities he saw, Lasseter started developing a hybrid feature, *The Brave Little Toaster*, which would have mixed traditional cartoon characters with CGI backgrounds. He pitched the film to his bosses, only to be met with blank hostility. One executive told him: "The only reason to do computer animation is if we can do it faster and cheaper." Lasseter's employment ended the same day. (*The Brave Little Toaster* was later released by Disney as an independent, traditionally drawn film in 1987, and has a fond following.)

Lasseter's experience was a hinge of fate. If only the executives had done what they claimed to do and followed Walt's example. Walt embraced innovations with gusto – indeed he built his studio



with them. The coming of sound first lifted Walt into stardom with his Mickey Mouse cartoon *Steamboat Willie* (1928). A decade later he spent thousands of dollars on 3D shots through a multi-plane camera (most prominently in *Pinocchio*), and thousands more on the customised, multitrack 'Fantasound' for *Fantasia*. Had his studio kept Lasseter on four decades later, then computer animation might have been Disney's new miracle. Pixar might be unknown today, and Disney still the king of feature animation.

In the real world, there was a management coup at Disney in 1984, triggered by Walt's nephew Roy E. Disney. (A note of clarification: Roy E. Disney, who died in 2009, was Roy O. Disney's son and Walt's nephew. Because both Roys bore a striking physical resemblance to Walt, and they were hugely important at different times in Disney's history, they're sometimes confused.) The coup brought in the management team of Michael Eisner, Jeffrey Katzenberg and Frank Wells, who had reportedly been considering ending Disney animation, had Roy not stepped in.

Under Eisner, Disney animation returned to prominence, though not by a direct route. Even before Eisner's takeover, there had been concern that Disney's name was becoming a liability, so Ron Miller had launched the more adult Touchstone Pictures division. We think of the Disney fairytale being revived by *The Little Mermaid* (1989), but a racier contender was Touchstone's debut, the live-action *Splash* (1984), which had the biggest opening in Disney's history, up to that point. The



HIDEBOUND
Long the home of hand-drawn animation such as Mickey Mouse, far left, Disney uses CGI for its new film 'Tangled', left, while sticking to its old pretty-princess subject-matter

bare-breasted mermaid (played by Daryl Hannah) was sexed up beyond anything the Disney brand could accommodate. She was Snow White's big sister for a youth market that – a survey of the time confirmed – wouldn't be caught dead watching traditional Disney.

Splash was followed in 1988 by *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*. Though a Disney co-production, *Roger Rabbit* didn't use Disney's in-house animators, apparently not deeming them up to the job. Instead producer Steven Spielberg and director Robert Zemeckis gave the work to London animator Richard Williams. According to the book *DisneyWar*, Roy (E.) Disney deemed *Roger* "too risqué" for the Disney name. The reason: a Mae West-ish quip in the script, "Is that a rabbit in your pocket, or...?" Like *Splash!*, *Roger Rabbit* was released under the Touchstone label, and excluded from Disney's 'canonical' 50 features – as are the gnarly stop-motion films that followed, *The Nightmare Before Christmas* and *James and the Giant Peach* (1996), both directed by Selick.

The bubble bursts

Disney animation's official comeback arrived in a renewed set of fairytales and animal sagas: *The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty and the Beast* (which was Oscar-nominated for Best Picture in 1991), followed by *Aladdin* (1992) and *The Lion King* (1994). Directly and indirectly, these films were shaped by the lyricist Howard Ashman, who stressed the affinity between cartoon drawings and the painted scenery of stage musicals. "We watch

in a different way," he argued of these media, "therefore it may be easier to sing." Disney's comeback is depicted in enthralling depth in a Disney documentary feature, *Waking Sleeping Beauty* (2009), now available on DVD (Region 1).

What followed is told in another documentary, 2005's *Dream on Silly Dreamer* (which *wasn't* released by Disney; the DVD is hard to find, though worth tracking down). It tells of the bursting of the Disney bubble, as animators' salaries rocketed and production was ramped up to a film a year, not counting despised cartoon 'cheapquels' such as *The Jungle Book 2* (2003). The implosion began in 2002, when more than 200 animation artists were laid off at Burbank, followed by similar carnage at Disney's other studios. *Dream on Silly Dreamer* heaps much of the blame on Disney's 'blockbuster' mentality (each new release 'had' to do as well as *The Lion King*) and executive interference with the story process. This may be true, though history tends to blur with ideology; animators and their fans are keen to demonise executives who can't draw – which would arguably have extended to Walt Disney. (A weak artist, he stopped animating

John Lasseter pitched a cartoon/CGI hybrid to his Disney bosses, only to be met with blank hostility

in the 1920s, well before Mickey Mouse.) I've interviewed several directors and animators who worked on *Atlantis the Lost Empire* and *Treasure Planet* who seemed genuine in their enthusiasm for these films, much as the results disappointed.

These sci-fi excursions reflected a search for a new identity for Disney. The Disney producer Don Hahn told me that if the studio stuck to fairytales, "the animated form [would] wither and die." But by now Disney was eclipsed by Pixar, the *Toy Story* studio led by Lasseter. Officially they were partners, Pixar's films being released by Disney. Right from the start, though, viewers saw them as competitors. Even when Disney and Pixar merged in 2006 – a \$7.4 billion deal engineered by Eisner's successor Robert Iger – the perception didn't change. Today, we think of *Up* (2009) and *Toy Story 3* (2010) as Pixar films, and *Bolt* and *The Princess and the Frog* as lesser Disneys.

At the moment, Disney's new CGI film *Tangled* – officially its 50th animated feature – looks to be its most popular cartoon in a decade. For all its pleasures, though, I think many of the young adult demographic who cheered *Toy Story 3* wouldn't be caught dead going to this pretty-princess Disney – any more than Spielberg fans in the 1980s would have gone to *The Fox and the Hound* (1981). Even ignoring Hahn's warning about fairy stories, both *Tangled* and *The Princess and the Frog* have to overcome too many negative impressions to feel like true rebirths. With a hand-drawn *Snow Queen* in development limbo, the next film on the Disney slate is a return to a decades-old comfort blanket, *Winnie the Pooh*. Nowadays, Pixar is the studio with an iconic identity, while Disney seems a mirage, less *Sleeping Beauty* than a Ghost of Christmas Past. But Disney has been here before. Last time around, this was when John Lasseter came in (and was thrown out) – and then Eisner and Ashman, and a brand new incarnation of Disney. Perhaps the next few years will see the final, quiet death of Disney animation – or another comeback in a form not even Lasseter could foresee.

■ Disney's first 50 animated features will screen chronologically at BFI Southbank during 2011; 'Tangled' is released on 28 January, and is reviewed on page 75





COBES/G

Darren Aronofsky has followed 'The Wrestler' with 'Black Swan', this time finding his trademark obsession, restlessness and bone-crunching self-harm in the ultra-formal world of ballet. **Nick James** talks to the director

DANCER IN THE DARK

TASK MASTER
Darren Aronofsky, above, has drawn an extraordinary performance from Natalie Portman in 'Black Swan'; left

Ever since Darren Aronofsky's breakthrough film *Pi* (1998) opened on the image of a face bisected by glass, his signature style of filmmaking has been 'up close and personal'. Repeated sequences of very fast cuts between image combinations – such as the dazzling needle-vein-eyeball shuffles in his career-making addiction drama *Requiem for a Dream* (2000) – are a trademark. For most of the intervening years since *Pi*, frenetic cuts and looming faces have been in heavy rotation in cinema and TV as a signifier of edginess or 'youth'. Recently, however, there seems to have been a general move away from the choppy, follow-my- ➤

Darren Aronofsky Black Swan

◀ actor mode, at least among the kind of films that are up for awards in this awards season – a shift towards a more measured approach to framing and movement (as in David Fincher's *The Social Network*, for instance). This change in fashion may militate against the chances of Aronofsky's new film *Black Swan*; if it doesn't, it'll be thanks to a high-risk performance from his lead, Natalie Portman, and the intriguing collision of his style with the film's subject-matter: ballet.

Aronofsky's last film *The Wrestler* (2008) revived the fortunes of Mickey Rourke by coaxing an intensely physical performance out of him, much of it in close proximity to a very agile camera lens. In *Black Swan*, however, this eyeballing, sinewy approach immediately creates an intriguing hybrid form, simply because ballet is such a formal discipline, usually viewed at a distance. That's why, right from the beginning, the on-the-shoulder camerawork that follows Natalie Portman's dancing protagonist Nina around in the centre of the theatrically lit stage action has a transgressive, treading-on-toes feel.

The welfare of toes, as it happens, is a crucial matter in the life of a ballerina. As part of the film's building attack on our physical comfort zones, we see toenails splitting, blood oozing from cuticles, a sense of the agony of feet made to do the unnatural load-bearing of *pointe* work. The sweaty gooseflesh of junkies may have been a prominent feature of *Requiem for a Dream*, but here Portman's human

'swanflesh' is soon subject to rashes, scratch marks and bursting follicles – phenomena that point towards the film's bravura transformative ending, an astonishing feather-bristling metamorphosis that pushes the film away from performative fantasy towards outright grand guignol horror – and that in itself is worth the price of a ticket.

The Black Swan is, of course, a character from Tchaikovsky's ballet *Swan Lake*: Odile, daughter of the sorcerer Von Rothbart. The White Swan is Odette, a princess who is turned into a swan by the sorcerer's spell; only at night does she turn back into a woman. When, by chance, Prince Siegfried sees Odette in human form, he falls in love with her – and eternal love is the key to breaking the spell. But Von Rothbart disguises the seductive Odile as Odette, so it's to Odile that the prince declares his love – thereby imprisoning Odette forever in the form of a swan. The same dancer usually plays both the Black and the White Swan – and that is the heart of Nina's dilemma.

In Aronofsky's film, this classic ballet myth has been seasoned with a dash of Dostoevsky's *The Double* and a soupçon of *All About Eve*. Nina is a promising chorus dancer who's told by impresario Thomas Leroy (Vincent Cassel, in full preening mode) that, while she's perfect for the White Swan, she's too out of touch with her sexual nature to play the Black Swan. (Leroy feels this way, that is, until he tries to force a passionate kiss on her – and she bites his lip.)

Every woman who surrounds Nina is, it seems, both a rival and her double – including suicidal, washed-up former principal dancer Beth (Winona Ryder); the seemingly friendly, sexy rival Lily (Mila Kunis), who wants to take Nina out clubbing; and even her jealous mother Erica (Barbara Hershey), who's terrified of Nina growing up and having a real success that she cannot share. As Nina tries to follow through on Leroy's injunction to discover her inner Black Swan, she begins to experience dangerous thrills, and to see unknown aspects of her personality in mirrors and/or projected on to others.

Black Swan is a kind of anti-Ophuls movie, where you're swirled into a film-long dance that's not at all about how easy it is, but about how tough and nerve-wracking and body-breaking performance can be. In its vertiginous spin towards a bloodstained whiteout apotheosis, it is not a film for all cinephiles. As in all of Aronofsky's films, there's little counterpoint or subtlety – and plenty of overload. We remain inside the head of the frigid ballerina discovering the Black Swan of sex and adulthood through characters who mirror her as doubles and hem her in to the brittle, precious world of the dance.

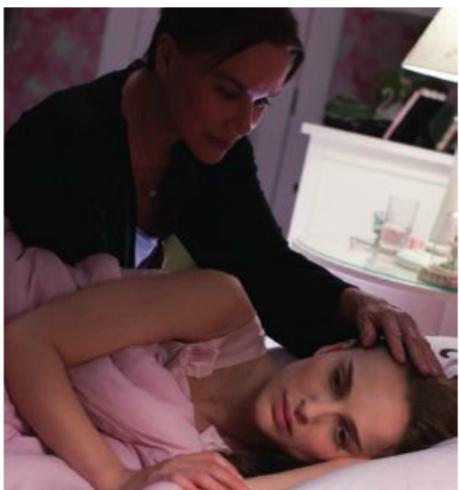
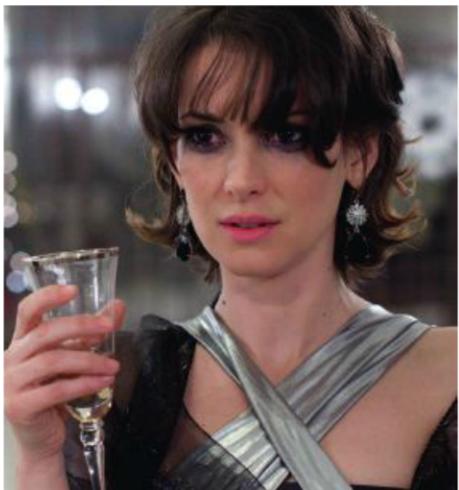
Perfectionism is of course a way of life for the ballet dancer, and the film shows how suffocating that love of 'perfection' can be – right down to the kitsch trinkets and music boxes that lure little girls into the sub-anorexic world of those who would sacrifice themselves to the medium. If I say that in its best moments *Black Swan* combines the lurid melodrama of Powell and Pressburger's *The Red Shoes* (1948) with the delicious kitsch of Robert Aldrich's *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?* (1962), I must add that this does not happen nearly often enough; instead we have to rely on the shock value of Aronofsky's perennial subtext, self-harm.

Aronofsky himself seems to have been having a tough time of late. He only recently split from his fiancée Rachel Weisz, with whom he has a four-year-old son. On the David Letterman show in November, Natalie Portman was critical of the way she was treated on the set of *Black Swan* after she lost 20 pounds for the role and then dislocated a rib. She received medical treatment but then, it has been alleged elsewhere, Aronofsky would not allow her to break character and wanted to carry on filming even though she was in pain.

If true, this would place Aronofsky in a tradition of directors who – like the impresario Lermontov in *The Red Shoes* – push their stars to the limit. But I'd heard none of this when I met him on a crisp autumn morning during the London Film Festival. He did look very pale and fragile, however; he told me that, after the gala screening of the film, some London friends had persuaded him to go out dancing. He hadn't done that in a while, he said – but at least he wasn't on points.

Nick James: When you finished 'The Wrestler', did you know that a film like 'Black Swan' – something with touches of horror about it – was the next film you wanted to make?

Darren Aronofsky: We finished *The Wrestler* a week before Venice [in 2008]. No one had seen it finished or in any form when we showed up, and then on Saturday we won the Golden Lion and on Sunday night, at 5am, we sold it to Fox Searchlight.



'I was always turned on by the idea of reinventing the werewolf movie with a were-swan film'

CENTRE STAGE
Natalie Portman with Darren Aronofsky, below, and opposite with Vincent Cassel, top right, and the three women who mirror her in 'Black Swan': Winona Ryder, top left, Barbara Hershey, bottom left, and Mila Kunis, bottom right

I half-believed all the hype about, "What are you doing making a film about Mickey Rourke and wrestling?" We had to really rush the film to open in Venice, and you really don't know what you have. You put all your ideas down and you think you might affect the audience that way.

I still don't know fully [about *Black Swan*] – it seems to be going pretty well. Audiences seem to be getting creeped and spooked out by it, having a good time with it. So – so far, so good. To be honest, even up to a few weeks before we started shooting, I was terrified of *Black Swan*.

NJ: After 'The Wrestler' you must have become the 'go to' guy for every actor who wanted their careers revived, but here you're working with someone who is young and successful and in the career groove.

DA: When we develop projects it's like they're all starting a marathon. The ones we go back to are the ones that make it across the finish line, and the reason we go back to them is there's something about them that pulls us in. I was always turned on by the idea of reinventing the werewolf movie with a were-swan film, turning Natalie Portman into some sort of creature. I was also really interested in exploring the ballet world, seeing what it was all about. So that's what pulled us back.

The script showed up about ten years ago and it was basically [about the] off-Broadway world, and I lost control of it. It was developed for many years without me. We acquired it about five years ago. I liked the engine of that original script, even

though it wasn't set in the ballet world. It took a lot of time to switch. The acting world and the ballet world are very different. There's the physicality, of course, but there's also [in ballet] a more intense, closed-off, incestuous world. Acting is much more connected to the planet. Ballet is very archaic.

NJ: When did Portman become part of the project?

DA: I first met Natalie about the project eight years ago in Times Square. I was always a fan of hers and – with that incredible carriage, neck and head – I thought she'd make a lovely ballerina. It's interesting that she's always cast as a girl when she's clearly become a woman. I wanted to be the director to scandalise her a little bit. It turned out that she was really into ballet. She had studied it from the age of four to 13 and she's a fan. She goes to the ballet a lot, and knows a lot of dancers.

NJ: So what was the training ritual for her like?

DA: Pretty brutal: for about a year she worked five hours a day doing ballet, swimming – all different types of stuff. She got to be in awesome shape and live a dream that she's had since she was a little girl, so I think she had a pretty good time.

NJ: How did you win over the notoriously standoffish ballet world?

DA: There were enough fans of *The Wrestler*, one dancer here, one dancer there, and pretty soon they couldn't deny us. Benjamin Millepied [who plays the Prince and is Portman's current boyfriend] was a big deal because he's a very respected choreographer and a principal dancer with the New York ➤



◀ City Ballet. He became a big supporter of ours. So slowly but surely they opened up. They were still very difficult to work with – to schedule was a nightmare. Dancers take a lot of abuse in their world and so they're very paranoid about being taken advantage of. They didn't know us from Adam and they couldn't really see what the upside for their careers could be. So there was a lot of paranoia and not much willingness to work with us.

NJ: The audience point of view is mostly inside the dance. To what extent did you have a choreographer work it out so that the camera's moves could work with those of the dancers?

DA: Benjamin Millepied and I went through *Swan Lake* and agreed the sections we wanted to focus on. I would tell Benjamin what was going on in the story and he would turn it into movement, based on classical choreography, but modernised and updated. He'd work it out with the dancers, then the DP, Matty [Matthew Libatique], would come down with a video camera and we'd start dancing with them and videotaping. When we would get to the real stage, we'd try to emulate that, but there would be all sorts of complications because of gear and shadows and reflections. We were really close to the dancers, so it was really easy to cast shadows. We had to pick out the different things one by one and solve them.

NJ: Did your camera operators have to go into training?

DA: It was two different guys. We cast the operator like we'd cast a role in a movie. There were callbacks and stuff to get the right person who could move well enough. It worked out pretty well.

NJ: There are things about ballet in the film that you don't usually get to see, like the massage scene.

DA: The woman in the film is a real physical therapist who, I think, was on-staff masseuse for ABT [the American Ballet Theatre] – and she actually helped Natalie a lot. I went to her once and thought, "Oh, I've got to put this on film. Would you do this for a scene?" We called her in at the last minute and just shot that.

NJ: The face swapping that goes on with Natalie and the other dancers she projects on to as her doppelgänger is fascinating. It happens so fast it's hard to tell, but does that also happen with Winona Ryder's character, the washed-up 'Dying Swan'?

DA: Not really, but because they look a lot alike, people are seeing it that way. Natalie is often in Winona's clothes. During the face-stabbing scene at a certain point it becomes Natalie – but it is just Natalie sitting there, it's not face-replacement. And in the apartment it's Natalie in Winona's clothes and some people see Winona, some people see Natalie, some people see the mom [Barbara Hershey], but that's just because of the casting. I tried to get this pixie look of all these different girls. It limited the palette – I mean the casting choices – but it homed me in to it.

NJ: It's a world of unchanging archetypes.

DA: Yeah, I don't know what generates what. You just see examples of it non-stop: ballet mothers who are very intense and not very self-aware. It can be very destructive, but there's a lot of beauty there too. To put yourself through that type of pain, you have to love ballet.

■ 'Black Swan' is released on 21 January, and is reviewed on page 49

DOUBLE VISIONS

The duplicated woman is a largely male fantasy that's inspired some of cinema's most imaginative works. Here Nick James looks at some of the more daring examples



METROPOLIS

Fritz Lang, 1927

We can't be sure if Thea von Harbou (Lang's screenwriter wife) consciously stole from *Swan Lake*, but when workers'-rights campaigner Maria (Brigitte Helm) – already a mix of Christ and the Madonna – is replicated by evil genius Rotwang's female robot, the echoes are deafening. Doubling usually strengthens a male character's power, yet – as we see here – it nearly always weakens a female's.



THE LIFE AND DEATH OF COLONEL BLIMP

Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger, 1943

Like the less loveable subject of Thomas Hardy's novel *The Well-Beloved*, old-school fair-play gent Colonel Blimp (Roger Livesey) falls in love with three different women at different times in his life, all of whom look the same (and all played by Deborah Kerr). But in this most romantic version of 'new wife syndrome', death takes each one away before the quietly doting Blimp stumbles miraculously across another.



SISTERS

Brian De Palma, 1972

Worth a look for its prescient 'Peeping Tom' game show and its Guy Maddin-like surgery fantasy, *Sisters* is the schlockiest example of the 'are there two or just the one?' version of the doubled female. More brilliant examples, such as Hitchcock's *Vertigo* and Bergman's *Persona* put De Palma's piece in the shade, of course, but neither of those has separated Siamese twins at the heart of its darkness.



THAT OBSCURE OBJECT OF DESIRE

Luis Buñuel, 1977

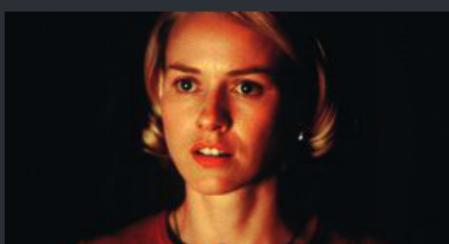
All our examples here are male fantasies. But Buñuel's gambit of having the coy mistress of Fernando Rey's smitten bourgeois played in rotation by two physically distinct actresses (the tall, skinny-chic Frenchwoman Carole Bouquet, and the shorter, more fleshly Spaniard Angela Molina) underlines the absurdity of male projections of the power of the virgin tease. The doubling blurs the woman.



THE DOUBLE LIFE OF VERONIQUE

Krzysztof Kieslowski, 1991

The myth of the doppelgänger – the double as harbinger of doom – is usually reserved for men. Here the post-wall East-West dichotomy is given flesh by Irène Jacob as two identical singers, Weronika and Véronique, momentarily in the same location shortly before one expires and the other changes. Games with mirrors and synchronicity abound in this gorgeous hymn to the poetry of fate and agnostic mysticism.



MULHOLLAND DR.

David Lynch, 2001

When ingénue Betty Elms (Naomi Watts) finds an amnesiac woman called Rita showering in her aunt's LA apartment, little do we know that she may simply be reimagining herself as a much nicer person than the suicidal Hollywood veteran she perhaps really is. The qualifiers I'm using here use indicate how slippery female (and actress) identity becomes in Lynch's abstruse nightmare.

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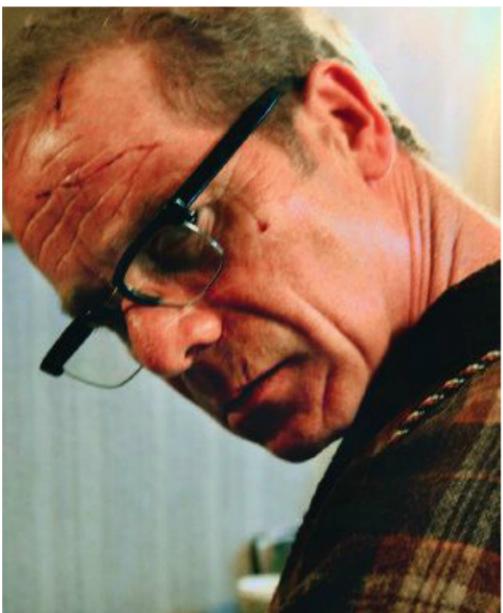
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Peter Mullan is already well known as one of Britain's most intense screen actors. But with 'Neds' he cements his reputation as a director whose commitment to emotional truth transcends social realism. By Demetrios Matheou

GLASGOW BELONGS TO ME



MAN AND BOY
In 'Neds', John (Conor McCarron, facing page) follows the violent path taken by his father (Peter Mullan, above, who also directs)

Peter Mullan recalls reading a newspaper report about the murder of an eight-year-old boy in Edinburgh: "This boy and his friend had watched a fight in the street involving two older boys. They knew nothing about it. After the fight, the victor chased after these two kids, just because they had been cheering for the other lad. And when he caught up with them, he beat one of them to death with a brick."

One might imagine that this is a story out of today's newspapers, at a time when street gangs and rising knife crime are a major concern (one recent report suggested that as many as 50,000 British teenagers are involved in gangs). In fact it was a cutting – presumably a yellowed one – from 1893. "When I read it I was really shocked, because the story was so familiar," says Mullan. "But this act of seemingly random violence, where a child lost his life, was well over a hundred years ago."

"So for me, today, you can't just blame society," he continues. "This problem is a massive, complex cocktail that stretches back to the beginnings of time. In England and Scotland you can date it to the industrial revolution, when you start seeing groups of young lads creating these weird territorial divides, only defined amongst themselves, with no particular financial gain to be had. It's about disaffected youth, having fuck all to do, not knowing who you are. It's aligning yourself with your peers – and you can only do that if you have another set of peers to align yourself against. You find your little grouping and you go, 'OK, what are we going to do? We'll take on that group, and that group. Let battle commence.'"

Insights such as this inform *Neds*, the Glaswegian's third feature as a director, steering the story of a 15-year-old's destructive dabbling with a gang of 'Non-Educated Delinquents' away from the stale sub-genre of contemporary British films about teen violence and hooliganism – which are so often little more than exploitation dressed as 'rites of passage' – towards something more thoughtful and resonant.





BROTHERS AND SISTERS

'Neds', right and below, is Peter Mullan's third film as director, following 'Orphans' and 'The Magdalene Sisters', opposite left and centre, and prize-winning acting in 'My Name Is Joe', opposite right



Set in the early 1970s, it follows the fortunes of John McGill, an intelligent working-class boy who looks set to transcend his impoverished background and escape the violent tendencies of both his father and elder brother. But his community doesn't make it easy: at school he's demoted to an inferior stream, merely because of his brother's reputation; later, during a fateful summer break, his crass, class-informed rejection by the mother of a well-to-do friend propels John into the welcoming bosom of a local gang, the Young CarDs. Before long, the mild-mannered newcomer has become the gang's resident monster.

Initially Mullan intended to look at the issues involved in gang culture. "I wanted to look at the nature of tribalism, education, the role of family, the church," he explains. "But as I was writing, I realised it was less about issues and more experiential. This is about adolescence. This isn't about gang, tribe, family, church – they're there, but it's really about the travails of youth and what happens between prepubescent and post-pubescent worlds.

"Of course, it would have to be set in an area of industrial decline," he continues, "but bringing no great mention of that industrial decline. I made a conscious effort to not look into these people's work lives, the employment issues of the time, the political culture. To really evoke adolescence, you have to be true to it, and when you're in the middle of that experience you don't give a monkey's fuck what's happening in the rest of the world. You care about your haircut, about how you're dressed, about who you're meeting tonight, if you're going to get off with somebody. It's purely hedonistic and narcissistic. I didn't want to be a middle-aged man forcing my view of the world upon this group of kids."

Realism and fantasy

It's now eight years since Mullan's last feature as director, *The Magdalene Sisters*. His powerful indictment of the Catholic church's incarceration and abuse of women in Ireland won the Golden Lion in Venice, while overcoming the obstructions of a

very vexed Vatican to achieve awards and sterling box office worldwide.

That film's success consolidated the reputation of Britain's most accomplished actor-director, a man whose work either side of the camera is characterised by its integrity and blistering authenticity. His first film *Orphans*, a visually vibrant, emotionally torrid tragicomedy about a Glasgow family, also won prizes in Venice back in 1998 – the same year Mullan picked up the best actor award in Cannes for his terrific turn as a recovering alcoholic in Ken Loach's *My Name Is Joe*.

At that point, the 'overnight sensation' had already been working for some years: first in Scotland's political theatre, then – following a

supporting role in Loach's *Riff-Raff* (1991) – in small parts in such significant Scotland-based films such as *Shallow Grave* (1994), *Braveheart* (1995) and *Trainspotting* (1996). At the same time he'd also been directing some terrific short films: *Close* (1994), *Good Day for the Bad Guys* (1995) and the award-winning *Fridge* (1995) – films that portrayed Glasgow working-class life with a combination of gritty realism, gallows humour and fantasy that anticipated the style of his feature work.

Mullan – who's speaking to me now from behind the giant white beard he's grown for his role in Steven Spielberg's film of the hit WWI play *War Horse* – never gives less than his all in his acting assignments. In Michael Winterbottom's



'I couldn't offer John redemption, because there is none. It's not as easy as John being allowed back to school'



'I get bored with social realism. If one has an imagination, one should use it... Let's go more towards Greek tragedy'

The Claim (2000), for instance, he was so focused on his snowbound death scene that he slipped into hypothermia without anyone realising. But one senses that his greater interest lies behind the camera. So why has there been such a long delay since *The Magdalene Sisters*?

"I got offered lorry-loads of scripts after *Magdalene*, from the States," he recalls. "And the challenge of working there would have been good, particularly after the American success of *Magdalene*, which helps your confidence no end. But nothing took my fancy. Nothing. I remember Peter Weir's statement, that unless you can relate a script to your soul, don't do it. It's not enough to think 'clever idea', because you've got to live with it for so long. In the meantime I was earning a living as an actor. Finally about four years ago I thought, 'I need to sit down and write something myself.'"

Within a year of finishing his script for *Neds*, he was turning the camera. "We were dead lucky," he admits. "The UK Film Council – who then existed – ring-fenced some money for us. Then Scottish Screen did the same. We got private funding from France. It was done really quickly. Then I just had to work out how we could shoot this film for the budget, £3.5 million, which was problematic. But had we tried to get the money six months later, we would never have managed it. We got it just before the banks collapsed."

Fact and fiction

Watching *Neds*, one can't help but draw parallels with what we know of Mullan's own life. Like John McGill, he came from a poor family, and his father was a violent alcoholic; he himself was a member of the Young Car-DS and – despite being a bright, bookwormy boy – played truant from school for the entire year of his gang career. And yet the director has pointedly diverted such comparisons in his own statement about the film being "personal, but not autobiographical". So where does he draw the line?

"If you were going to do an autobiographical piece, you would have to remain completely faithful to at least your own version of the truth,"

he says. "Whereas this is easily 90 per cent fiction, albeit very much influenced by things I saw, heard about and experienced. There were tiny bits of pressure, way back – people saying it would sound better if it's 'a true story'. But it's not a true story, so it felt more honest to say so, in advance."

The border between fact and fiction is at its most intriguing in Mullan's own performance as the boy's father, who fits the description he once gave me of his own father: "one of those people who come into a room with the smell of death, and suck the life out of it". He says that he and his brother Lenny, who cast the film, decided early on that he would be 'plan B' for the father. Only when they failed to secure their desired actors, and money started to get tight, did Mullan take the role – for the princely sum of £400.

"At that point, Lenny was a bit concerned that it could fuck me around mentally," he recalls. "I had no such worries, because I knew it was just a character – it was not my dad – and playing him was ridiculously easy. Funnily enough, if I'm honest, every word that he says in the film is verbatim from my own experience. My father did say those things, and do those things. But it was not a case of working out issues with my dad, but presenting that kind of behaviour as starkly as I could."

He describes his performance, with some relish, as "borderline over the top". This was in keeping with his instruction to his adult cast, which includes his *My Name Is Joe* co-stars Gary Lewis, Louise Goodall and David McKay. "I wanted the kids to be very much rooted in the real world. To differentiate between grown-up and child, I wanted a slightly older-fashioned acting style, more akin to 70s acting, less obsessed with distilled naturalism. So I told the adult actors not to be afraid to go towards *Please Sir!*, or a bit *Play for Today* – not to be afraid to float a couple of inches above reality and" – he laughs – "just out of range of being hammered by the critics."

This attitude typifies a directorial style that is not as close as one might assume to the social realism of, say, Loach and Alan Clarke; indeed, that's a tendency Mullan consciously resists.

While Conor McCarron, who plays the older John, reminds one of Ray Winstone in Clarke's *Scum* (1979), comparisons with that film fade in the light of John's Jesus fantasies and his epiphanic encounter with a pride of lions.

"I get bored with naturalism and social realism – unless it's beautifully served to me, in the case of somebody like Ken Loach," Mullan confesses. "I get restless with it. If one has an imagination, one should use it – in my book. Towards the end of the story I thought, 'Let's let go of any form of social realism. Let's go more towards Greek tragedy and – fuck it – pantomime.' The rest of the film is all well and good – low-key, understated, social this, social that. Personally, when it goes off into never-never land, I find it far more exciting."

The flamboyance of the film's final reel coincides with Mullan's decision to move beyond his initial ending (when John is allowed back to school), in the process confounding our conditioned assumption about the boy's redemption.

"I couldn't offer John redemption, because there is none," he says – as if that's no bad thing, redemption being a solution too easily offered up by fiction. "There is a journey out of this, but it's not as easy as John being allowed back to school," he says. "If I had finished the film then, it would have been more akin to some of Alan Clarke's work, which is very much about people being fucked over by society. No offence, I adore his work – but for me that's too simplistic."

Mullan is particularly frustrated by the 18 certificate given to *Neds* by the BBFC, because the audience he's really aiming for is the same age as his protagonist. "I'm under no illusions," he says. "They are not going to sit there and go, 'You know what, chaps, I say we get rid of the fucking blades and go back to making carrot cake?' But if any kid sees what John ends up doing in *Neds*, I would love to think he will say, 'I don't wanna do that. That's where I draw the line.' And that's when I will have achieved something."



"Diego Luna is a director to watch"
EMPIRE



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"Dark, elusive, moving"
LITTLE WHITE LIES

A FILM BY **DIEGO LUNA**

ABEI

Cert 15 Contains strong language

FROM EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS JOHN MALKOVICH & GAELE GARCÍA BERNAL

José María
Yazpik

Karina
Gidi

Christopher
Ruiz-Esparza

Gerardo
Ruiz-Esparza

Being the man of the house at 9 years old was never going to be an easy ride



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Reviews

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Reviews, synopses and full credits for all the month's new films, plus the pick of the new books and DVDs

The King's Speech Though he never overplays the pathos, Colin Firth's Bertie makes us feel it in the simplest lines. "What are friends for?" asks his speech therapist. Bertie stares at him bleakly. "I wouldn't know," he responds ↗ p62

Book of revelations

The Bressonian style and metaphysical concerns of Eugène Green may be an acquired taste, but they achieve their most perfect expression in his new film 'The Portuguese Nun'. **Peter Matthews** finds himself ripe for conversion

The Portuguese Nun

Eugène Green, 2009

Checking in at a Lisbon hotel, actress Julie de Haurenanne tells the receptionist about her current project, a minimalist exercise composed of silent visuals and a 17th-century French text to be read entirely off screen. Unimpressed, the receptionist replies: "I never see French films. They're for intellectuals." Speaking later to a make-up girl, Julie euphemistically describes the approach as "unconventional". "Boring, you mean," is the tart rejoinder. Julie's quiet demurral – "I hope not. The story moves me" – perhaps supplies the key to writer-director Eugène Green's ravishing new work.

Far from wishing to pull rank on the philistine tastes of dressers and concierges, Green wryly and stoically acknowledges that his recherché style won't grab everyone. With its zombified performances, oracular dialogue and tone of deliberate mystification, *The Portuguese Nun* is apt to strike the uninitiated as howlingly pretentious, and then some. Like Rossellini or Rivette or de Oliveira (two of whose stock company appear here), Green sits dangerously on the cusp between the sublime and the absurd. Surmounting the intransigent oddity of his films possibly demands a certain leap of faith. Yet it often happens that those most bitterly agnostic are the ripest for conversion. So if you feel utterly nonplussed, wait and see. You may find that you have been seduced by stealth and entered the small, growing band of devotees for whom Green's cinema comes near to fulfilling an absolute.

The simple, episodic narrative might be labelled metaphysical-picaresque. When she isn't busy shooting, Julie impulsively roams the city, visiting fado bars, riding on a tram, enjoying the touristy sights, but always returning to the same still point – a hilltop chapel that serves as one of her film's locations.



Green's films owe so little to the ethos of speed, bombast and encrusted formulas that watching them is like having the mote sprung from your eye

While these desultory wanderings recall Antonioni, there's a big difference. In Green's neoplatonic universe, essence precedes existence and chance is just another word for the divine will.

Julie's peregrinations lead to a series of cryptic rendezvous with fellow lost souls, each forming a vital piece in the cosmic jigsaw she puzzles over. Among them are down-at-heel aristocrat Henrique, ennui-laden and suicidal; her co-star Martin (Green perennial Adrien Michaux), restless in his settled bourgeois marriage; and most poignantly, street urchin Vasco, crying out for a mother's care. Dispensing favours impartially to all she meets, Julie learns that nothing whatever divides secular from ideal love –

which as it turns out is also the moral of her experimental costume drama, an adaptation of Comte de Guilleragues' novel *Letters of a Portuguese Nun*, concerning the heroine's illicit passion for a military officer. In a prankish touch, Green casts himself as the auteur of this impecunious epic, Denis Verde, who, after shaking his booty unavailingly at a disco, delivers the jaded *pensée*: "Hipness can be pretty depressing."

That could stand as the general maxim for a cinema that renounces passing trends and unswervingly

JULIE OF THE SPIRITS
Visiting Lisbon, French actress Julie (Leonor Baldaque, all pictures) meets her co-star Martin (Adrien Michaux, below) and the reincarnation of a 16th-century king (Carloto Cotta, above)



follows its own inner light. Green's films owe so little to the modern, hyper-industrialised ethos of speed, bombast and encrusted formulas that watching them is like having the mote sprung from your eye. What many will condemn as whimsical affectation represents a stringent attempt to jolt the audience out of sensory sloth and restore its original, pristine vision (never was a filmmaker more suitably named).

His characters might be invaders from Mars for the relation they bear to ordinary psychological realism. Bresson's stolid, robotic 'models' are an obvious antecedent, and though Green employs trained actors, his spiritual wager is similar. By forfeiting the pat emotional intensities of naturalism, he hopes to win the viewer a glimpse of something ineffably larger. As Julie, Leonor Baldaque persistently breaks the fourth wall with her great bulging stare – less an instance of Brechtian distancing than the open, empathetic avowal that we are all of us seekers. Aficionados will recognise this solicitous direct address as one of the systematic devices that was born fully fledged in Green's 2001 debut film *Toutes les nuits* (an austere reinvention of Flaubert), and which he has plied with scant variation ever since.

You wonder where Green can go after *The Portuguese Nun*, for it seems to consummate his method, achieving the Apollonian calm of a valedictory statement. There were still discreet vestiges of melodrama in Green's last feature *Le Pont des Arts* (2004), which pits two romantic dreamers against an irredeemably fallen world embodied by academic poseurs and cultural mafiosi. In that film, the chief nemesis is a diabolical conductor who destroys the heroine, a Monteverdi singer, for no other reason than abomination of her lyrical gift.

Now, however, Green himself has burned off any lingering rancour and gained a total clarity of means. The customary tics – a flattening of Renaissance perspective in rigid, centred compositions, an Ozu-like insistence on depopulated space, a Bressonian obsession with



ambulatory feet (the better to show pilgrims on their journey) – are all present and accounted for. But they no longer bespeak a faintly dandified refusal of norms, this time holding a purely ceremonial intent.

As Julie flits from one obscure encounter to the next, her allegorical progression increasingly suggests the rituals of the mass, or it may be the stations of the cross. In virtually every case, a lengthy, tableauesque two-shot of the characters in profile yields to a quicker shot-reverse-shot pattern in frontal close-up (another Ozu speciality) when the conversation reaches its climax. Green's repetitive, iconographic *mise en scène* steadfastly witnesses an invisible order above mere temporal contingency. Reciprocally, his inchmeal panning and tracking reveals Lisbon *sub specie aeternitatis* – as no horizontal city, but the product of a more vertical inspiration.

Julie might be a sister to one of Rohmer's tenaciously fanciful women, and sceptics will doubtless rate her comparably unendurable. Late in the film, she hatches the invincible idea that a young man is the reincarnation of 16th-century Portuguese king D. Sebastião, but then ducks his advances with a coy promise of third time lucky. Why?

"It's always three times in stories." The trustful magic of that line evokes Green's 2003 *Le Monde vivant*, a quasi-medieval fairytale in which a blue-jeaned knight's dog is a lion just because he says so. This evidently flippant conceit boasts a long pedigree in Western theology,

where it goes under the title of 'Logos' or 'the Word made flesh'. Overturning generations of deconstructive thought, Green resacralises language – claiming back its ancient, mystical role as the creational principle in action.

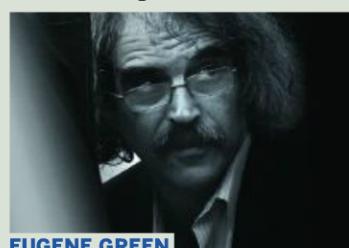
Julie's final, decisive epiphany

A path to liberty

Eugène Green on faith and fado in 'The Portuguese Nun'

There is a demagogical reflex that consists in denouncing cultural references found in an art work as manifestations of 'elitism'. The enemies of elitism in general also require a film to have a political message. I don't believe that cinema can directly change relations of power, nor that that is its role. But a cinematic experience can change the viewer's mind. In that way 'The Portuguese Nun' may be a political film, because it could open up in those who see it a path to liberty – which is, above all, an inner state.

Because Lisbon is one of the leading characters of the film, it seemed essential to include its audible soul, which is fado. This musical and poetical form represents what is most essential in Portuguese culture: the meeting, in the present, of memory and desire, of past and future. I was fortunate enough to obtain the collaboration of two of today's greatest fado singers, Camané and Aldina Duarte.



EUGÈNE GREEN

It was also important to me to include in the film the presence of the 'Encoberto' – the Hidden One – who is the subject of the most important Portuguese myth: the expectation of the 'Fifth Empire', incarnated by King D. Sebastião, which is subjacent in 'The Portuguese Nun'; but on a metaphorical level. In a world that seems every day more like a conglomeration of fragments with no connection between them, it is the search, illuminated by hope, for a path that would give meaning to human existence.

occurs with the eponymous nun, who keeps a prayerful vigil each night in that supernal chapel. Lamenting her artist's fate to "show the truth through unreal things", she is reassured that He did likewise when He fashioned the world. The nun could be defining the vocation of cinema, at least as Green practises it. Symmetrically arranged on either side of her in the image are two candelabra, their tiny rows of flame pointing (where else?) upward. If Green's style dematerialises photographic reality into so many abstract ciphers, it's his way of insinuating that the book of nature is equally the Book of God.

Having already swooned twice when the kneeling postulant seemed to vanish into thin air, Julie understandably requires elucidation. It arrives via the transcendental counsel that we should love until we no longer exist. Our adventuress duly interprets the runes and elects to pitch her tent with the needy Vasco. It's probably a good sign that Green ends the film on this modest, humanist gesture. His baroque Christian sensibility is undeniably vulnerable to charges of conservatism and escapism, but here for once he comes down to earth.

For credits and synopsis, see page 71

Abel

Mexico/USA 2010

Director: Diego Luna

With Karina Gidi, José María Yazpik, Christopher Ruiz-Esparza

This debut feature from Mexican actor-turned-director (and Gael García Bernal's other half in the production company Canana) Diego Luna is a stylish, offbeat fable with a satirical bite. The eponymous nine-year-old protagonist has spent the last two years in a psychiatric hospital because he's stopped talking – presumably after his father Anselmo left to work in the US, a far from uncommon domestic situation in Mexico. Abel's mother struggles to raise his younger brother Paúl and older sister Selene, but still takes Abel back into the family for a week, in an attempt to help him snap out of his condition before he's transferred to a children's hospital. But when Abel does start talking again, he appears to have assumed the identity of his father, giving us his own skewed version of patriarchal order; at times this feels profoundly strange, at others crudely funny, as when Selene invites Abel to the Father's Day celebrations at Paúl's school, or when Abel consoles her when she's dumped by her boyfriend.

There is a genuine charm to *Abel*. Locating the story mainly within the walls of an isolated, rambling old house on the outskirts of a provincial Mexican city, Luna creates a peculiar mood that permeates the whole film – an impishly fresh take on outdated magical realism. With the help of a playful soundtrack and clever sound cues he constructs the innocently disturbing fantasy world of a child – Tim Burton in a more naturalist mode. Visual gimmicks such as repeatedly flickering lights and bursting pipes give the impression that reality is in a constant state of tension.

Luna's assured direction and pacing, together with a sharp script (co-written with Augusto Mendoza), fuse most touchingly in the depiction of the relationship between bemused mother and her newly assertive son. The director never lets this slip into cuteness or sentimentality but instead continually understates it, creating vivid, everyday tableaux filled with almost palpable warmth.



Boy wonder: Christopher Ruiz-Esparza, Gerardo Ruiz-Esparza

It's a strategy that also holds the story's melodramatic potential in check, and most importantly gives credibility to scenes that otherwise could have been toe-curling, such as an attempt by Abel to perform his sexual duties as a husband.

Of course on one level *Abel* works as a metaphor for an infantilised patriarchy in Mexican society, and sure enough, soon after Abel's transformation, his father Anselmo materialises. Unfortunately, the minute the adults' world assumes authority over the children's, heavyhanded Freudian symbolism takes precedence over straightforward, albeit off-kilter drama. Out of the blue, we get a full dose of Oedipal analogies in an overblown penultimate scene involving a swimming pool, which consequently leads to Abel's regression.

Still, the film's open ending is as enigmatic and enticing as its beginning. Even though the origin of Abel's behaviour is loosely related to his father's abandonment of the family, there are never specific explanations about his condition, nor indeed are there any clues about what will happen to him in the future; all of which creates the necessary mystery and ambiguity to keep us wanting more, and, paradoxically, the reassuring feeling that we've actually got to know these characters in some depth.

— Mar Diestro-Dópido

SYNOPSIS Aguascalientes, Mexico, the present. Nine-year-old Abel has been in a psychiatric ward for two years after he suddenly stopped speaking. His mother Cecilia takes him back home for a week to his little brother Paúl and older sister Selene in an attempt to cure him. After one day back home Abel starts speaking, but assumes the role of their father (who left two years ago, supposedly to work in the US). Afraid that he might suffer a relapse if anyone confronts him about it, everyone in the family plays along. Not long afterwards, Abel's father Anselmo returns from his travels and is told by Cecilia to pretend that he's Abel's cousin, much to his consternation. In fact, Anselmo never went to the US but instead started a new family in another Mexican city, and now wants to sell the family property to generate cash. After an argument in which Anselmo tells the doctor about Abel's assumption of the paternal role, and recommends he be taken back into care despite Cecilia's opposition, Abel takes Paúl to the swimming pool to teach him how to swim (even though he himself can't swim). When they learn about this, the family set off in pursuit. Just as the two children are about to drown in the pool, Cecilia saves them. Anselmo leaves and Cecilia accepts that the best thing is for Abel to go to the children's hospital in Mexico City; once there, he stops talking again. She visits him regularly.

Casting Director

Natalia Beristáin

Camera Operators

B: Kenji Katori

B: Iwao Kawasaki

Steadicam Operator

Gerardo Manjarrez

Gaffer

Leonardo Julián

Key Grip

Roberto Oviedo

Computer Animation/Visual Effects

Tabbo

Special Effects Supervisor

Arturo Marín

Art Director

Juan Pablo García

Set Decorator

Francisca 'La Paca' Maira

Property Master

Claudio Castelli

Construction Manager

Sergio Fuentes García

Costume Designer

Anne Terrazas

Wardrobe Master

Carlos 'Pollo' Munguía

Hair/Make-up Designer

Carlos Sánchez

Hairstylist

Maribel Romo

Titles

Oliver Meneses

Music Supervisor

Lynn Fainthein

Soundtrack

"Abel" – Julieta Venegas: "El ausente" – Los Luceros: "Pum Pum" – Esmeralda Smith: "Macho Man" – The Village People: "Como tú ninguna" – Los Barón de Apodaca: "Nunca más me iré" – Cornelio Reyna: "Mírala" – Los Llamadores de Cartagena

Sound Designers

Pablo Lach

Salvador Félix

Sound Recordist

Santiago Núñez

Re-recording Mixers

Pablo Lach

Jaime Bakht

Michell Couttolenc

CAST

Karina Gidi

Cecilia

José María Yazpik

Anselmo

Christopher

Ruiz-Esparza

Abel

Carlos Aragón

Dr Monárez

Geraldine Alejandra

Selene

Gerardo Ruiz-Esparza

Paul

Gabino Rodríguez

Clemente

Lucero Trejo

Esperanca

María Elena Cervantes

cook

Marcela Ruiz Esparza

teacher

Úrsula Pruneda

Dr Islas

Norma Ángelica

taxi driver

Mauricio Isaac

policeman

Francisco Franco Alba

spa employee

Dolby Digital

In Colour

[2.35:1]

Subtitles

Distributor

Network Releasing

Amer

Belgium/France 2009

Directors: Hélène Cattet, Bruno Forzani

With Cassandra Forêt, Charlotte Eugène Guibbaud, Marie Bos

Certificate 18 90m 34s

Near the beginning of *Amer*, as a mother (Bianca Maria D'Amato) adjusts her belt buckle, her young daughter Ana (Cassandra Forêt) puts her fingers in her ears to block out the scratching of metal on metal. The noise is amplified to unnaturally loud levels on the film's soundtrack, though whether this represents what Ana can hear through her sound-suppressing fingers, or rather what she imagines she would hear, remains unclear. For in *Amer* the subjective experiences of impressionable, hypersensitive Ana are presented as a stylised blur of blinkered perceptions, readily supplemented and exaggerated by her fantasies and fears.

Following two award-winning short films – *La fin de notre amour* (2004) and *Santos Palace* (2006) – Belgian writing/directing team Hélène Cattet and Bruno Forzani's feature debut is a psychodrama in triptych, with its three acts unfolding in and around an ancestral villa, each representing a formative episode in the life (and death) of Ana (her three-lettered, palindromic name reflecting the film's tripartite, cyclical structure). In the first part, after witnessing her grandfather's corpse being furtively attended by the family's housemaid, the pagan 'witch' Graziella, and catching her parents *in flagrante*, the young girl succumbs to a horrifying, Svankmajer-inflected wet dream in which she must struggle to escape the clutches of Graziella and grandfather alike in her shadowy bedroom. In the second part, as adolescent Ana (Charlotte Eugène Guibbaud) grows aware of the power and allure of her burgeoning sexuality, her mother, whether out of protectiveness or jealousy, cuts her down in her prime. In the third part, Ana, now a sexually repressed adult (Marie Bos), returns to the villa, where she plays out in her disturbed psyche – and possibly also in reality – all her desires and fears to do with men.

Amer is a surrealist homage to the thematic preoccupations, visual stylings and musical cues of Italian genre cinema. Here all the primal scenes, sinister bewitchings, gloved killers and colour codings are borrowed from *gialli*, while the eclectic score has been appropriated directly from various 1970s *poliziotteschi*, and the beautifully styled erotica of the middle section recalls the fetishistic softcore of Tinto Brass. Yet the dynamic manner in which Cattet and Forzani integrate their sources is exemplified by their selection of the musical theme from Massimo Dallamano's *What Have They Done to Your Daughters?* (1974) – which features a murderous motorcyclist – to underscore the teenage Ana's yearnings for a transgressive 'ride' with some macho bikers, as well as her mother's refusal to let her daughter go.

SYNOPSIS Young Ana and her parents move into a villa; the body of her recently deceased grandfather is laid out downstairs. Ana is curious about the corpse, and terrified of Graziella, the elderly housemaid (dubbed a witch by Ana's mother). One night, after stealing a fob watch from her grandfather's dead hands (only to see his eyes open), and catching her parents having sex, Ana has a feverish nightmare about water, witchcraft and wings.

As an adolescent, Ana attracts the male gaze in a way that her mother no longer can. While her mother is having her greying hair coloured in the local town, Ana, drawn by the sound of engines, strays to the town's limits. There she sees a gang of young bikers – but as she approaches them her mother appears and slaps her. The two return to the villa.

The adult Ana arrives by taxi at the now dilapidated villa, fantasising on the way about being raped by her driver. She leaves her headscarf behind in the cab. Later, while masturbating in the bath, Ana is attacked and nearly drowned by a mysterious gloved figure. That night, she awakens in bed, her legs covered in blood, and hears someone moving about. She sneaks into the garden but is grabbed from behind by the gloved figure and menaced with a razor. The cab driver, who has come to return her headscarf, is bloodily murdered. Ana, herself now wearing the black gloves, awakes by his body. She is chased by the dark figure, before confronting and stabbing him.

Ana's naked body, with wrists slashed, lies on a mortuary table. As hands arrange her corpse, Ana's eyes open.

For *Amer* is no mere pastiche, but a mosaic of hints and suggestions for a narrative that remains elliptical and ambiguous to the end. It is a story with almost no accompanying dialogue to pin its meaning down, a murder mystery without a detective to solve it – and its coda, far from providing an explanation, serves up a series of irrational echoes (hands on flesh, dripping water, opening eyes, the living dead) that will send viewers flailing back through all that has preceded in search of a way to make more than partial sense of the film's impenetrable sequence of spiralling signifiers.

The result is an uneasy mood piece that will leave audiences both enthralled and not a little puzzled – and for all its engagement with a kind of Italian cinema long past and for some viewers long since forgotten, its exquisite crafting makes it stand out as a true original in today's horror market.  **Anton Bitel**

CREDITS

Directed by
Hélène Cattet
Bruno Forzani
Produced by
Eve Commengé
François Cognard

Written by
Hélène Cattet
Bruno Forzani

Director of

Photography
Manu Dacosse

Film Editor

Bernard Beets
Art Director

Alina Santos

©Anonymes Films,
Tobina Films
Production
Companies
Anonymes Films,
Tobina Films present a
film by Hélène Cattet,
Bruno Forzani

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With the support of La
SACD Belgique

Production Manager
Eve Commengé

Production
Supervisors

Stéphane Sécq
Stéphane Collige

Assistant Director

1st: Joël Godfroid

Script Supervisor
Bruno Pons
Camera Operator
Manu Dacosse
Steadicam Operator
Guillaume Renoir
Gaffer
Juan Fontes Salinas
Key Grip
Guillaume Renoir
Digital Special Effects
Daniel Bruylants
Set Decorator
Julia Iribarria
Property Master
Daniel Bruylants
Construction Managers
Renan Harmon
Gaspard Berlier
Wardrobe Mistress/
Make-up/Hair
Charlotte Sidérius
Special Make-up Effects
Lionel Lé
Soundtrack
"La coda dello scorpione seq. 1" from *La coda dello scorpione/ The Case of the Scorpion's Tale* by Bruno Nicolai; "Un Uomo si è dimesso" from *La tarantola dal ventre nero/ Black Belly of the Tarantula* by Ennio Morricone; "La polizia sta a guardare" from *La polizia sta a guardare/ The Great Kidnapping*; "La polizia chiede aiuto" from *La polizia chiede aiuto/ What Have They Done to Your Daughters?*; "La polizia ha le mani legate" from *La polizia ha le mani legate/ Killer Cop* by Stelvio Cipriani; "Furore" by Adriano Celentano, Ezio Leoni, Piero Vivarelli
Sound Recordist
Iannis Heaulme
Re-recording Mixer
Luc Thomas
Sound Editor
Daniel Bruylants
Animal Trainer
Animal Contact

CAST
Jean-Michel Vovk
father
Harry Cleven
taxi driver
Bianca Maria D'Amato
mother
Cassandra Forêt
Ana as a child
Marie Bos
Ana as an adult
Charlotte Eugène Guibbaud
Ana as an adolescent
Delphine Brual
Graziella
Bernard Marbaix
dead grandfather
Thomas Bonzani
None
Charles Forzani
farmer/man with red car
Jean Sécq
male grocer
Béatrice Butler
female grocer
Benjamin Guyot
Yves Foster
refuse collectors
François Cognard
silhouette
Francesco Italiano
embalmer at morgue
Henriette Raimondé
old lady behind the curtain
Christophe Da Silva
André Farnol
Nicolas Léandri
Damien Gossa
Arnaud Mariani
Laurent Lafont
Frédéric Miniutti
Gordon Butler
Elia Zanzo
Cyril Dellerba
Jérôme Konté Deloste
Stéphane Peragnoli
William Boutaleb
Maxime Lefort
Reda Oualla
Florian Grolier
Jérôme Herrera
Mathieu Ambid
Juan Fontes Salinas
Daniel Bruylants
bikers
Sylvain Giraud
Stéphane Collige
Georgy Volkaerts
Guillaume Renoir
Daniel Bruylants
Colin Lévéque
Juan Fontes Salinas
Joël Godfroid
passengers on train

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[2.35:1]
Subtitles

Distributor
Anchor Bay
Entertainment UK

8,151 ft +0 frames

Read my lips: 'Amer'

Báthory

Slovakia/United Kingdom/
Hungary 2008

Director: Juraj Jakubisko

With Anna Friel, Karel Roden,
Vincent Regan, Hans Matheson

Certificate 15 140m 23s

In the four centuries since her death in prison, Countess Erzsébet Báthory (1560-1614) has become the most notorious of all Europe's aristocratic monsters, her reputation capped by a *Guinness World Records* entry as the most prolific murderer ever. Unsurprisingly, she's no stranger to the cinema, having been played by Ingrid Pitt (*Countess Dracula*, 1971), Delphine Seyrig (*Daughters of Darkness*, 1971), Paloma Picasso (*Immoral Tales*, 1974) and many others, while the name Báthory is a frequent signifier of blood-curdling evil – *Hostel II* (2007) offering a recent example.

So the most immediately striking aspect of Juraj Jakubisko's film is that despite being marketed on the back of the 'bloody countess' legend (its German and Brazilian titles even include that phrase), its thesis is that Erzsébet Báthory is an even more unjustly maligned victim of political propaganda than Richard III. In Jakubisko's version, she killed some people, but nowhere near the 650 of legend, and the virgins' blood in which she allegedly bathed was a harmless herbal concoction. So far, so intriguing – and Jakubisko's multi-hyphenate involvement makes it more enticing still. Although little known in English-speaking countries, the so-called 'Slovak Fellini' has long displayed one of the more baroque cinematic imaginations to emerge from the former Czechoslovakia in the past five decades, attracting deserved comparisons with compatriot Juraj Herz and the latter's friend and occasional colleague Jan Svankmajer.

Báthory apparently boasted the biggest budget in Slovak film history, and one can certainly see where the money went: each widescreen frame is typically packed with so much meticulously crafted detail as to make Josef von Sternberg and Peter

Greenaway seem minimalist, while the latter's work is also recalled by the copious nudity. However, while the eye is constantly seduced, the ear has to cope with horribly clunky English dialogue delivered in a variety of Central European accents, many of them all too genuine. Regular outbreaks of voiceover narration by the film's onscreen chronicler, the monk Peter, attempt to make sense of the background rivalry between the Habsburg and Ottoman empires.

More seriously, the attempt to revise the historical record is undermined by a central romance between Erzsébet and the painter Caravaggio for which there is no evidence bar an unexplained gap in his biography. While this offers Jakubisko a perfect excuse to indulge in appropriately chiaroscuro imagery, it also makes his central argument impossible to follow – if the apparently crucial Caravaggio episode is wholly fictional, how seriously should we treat the film's other claims? As Erzsébet, Anna Friel tries hard in a thankless role, but the film's determination to present her as an often passive victim of tragic circumstance offers her little opportunity to let rip in the grand style of her predecessors, for all her extravagant costumes and hairstyles.

Each of the film's three main parts is named after a dominant figure in her life: her husband Ferenc Nadásdy (though he takes a back seat to the Caravaggio shenanigans, spending much of the time on the battlefield fighting Turks and Catholics), the witch Darvulia, and Habsburg Count Thurzó, primary instigator of the Báthory legend and the film's main villain. The Darvulia episode sees the film at its most self-consciously hallucinatory, as she plies Erzsébet with various mind- and image-bending substances (including magic mushrooms) in the guise of helping to preserve her youth – though none of the resulting visions matches the startling early sequence in which Erzsébet commissions Caravaggio to paint her stillborn child, clad in red and perfectly preserved in a block of ice. But the occasionally unexpected ingredient and decorative flourish doesn't make this Euro-pudding any more palatable.  **Michael Brooke**

SYNOPSIS Cachtice, Hungary, 1593. While her Protestant husband Ferenc Nadásdy fights in numerous battles between Catholic Habsburg and Muslim Ottoman forces, Erzsébet Báthory meets the Italian painter Merisi Caravaggio and commissions him to paint her dead baby, preserved in a block of ice. She confesses to a fascination with her aunt Anika, with whom she shares a distinctive birthmark. Their romance blossoms; the Habsburg Count Thurzó tells Ferenc about her infidelity, and attempts to poison Caravaggio. Erzsébet accidentally drinks the poison, and is cured by the witch Darvulia. Intrigued by Darvulia's claim that she can preserve her youth, Erzsébet agrees to a regime involving potions and herbal baths. Rumours spread that Erzsébet bathes in the blood of murdered virgins (whose bodies are found marked with the Báthory crest), and Ferenc is killed in battle. Erzsébet's cousin Gábor vows to protect her from Thurzó's machinations. Darvulia's potions trigger hallucinations, and Erzsébet is increasingly unsure of her own mind, stabbing a servant to death for a minor infraction, and has Darvulia imprisoned. She is briefly reunited with Caravaggio during a masked ball. Thurzó spreads rumours that Erzsébet is in league with the devil. Darvulia dies after writing Thurzó's name in blood. Tensions between Erzsébet and Thurzó break out into open conflict, culminating in her arrest. Her associates are tortured and killed, and she is sentenced to life imprisonment.

In 1614, in the Black Tower, Erzsébet burns herself to death.



CREDITS

Directed by

Juraj Jakubisko

Produced by

Deana Jakubisková-

Horváthová

Producers

Markéta Zahradníková

Mike Downey

Zorana Pigott

Sam Taylor

Jaroslav Kucera

Vladimír Bednář

Written by

Juraj Jakubisko

Directors of

Photography

F.A. Brábec

Ján Duris

Edited by

Christopher Blunden

Patrik Pass

Production Design &

Key Artwork by

Juraj Jakubisko

Music Composed by

Jan Jirásek

Simon Boswell

Maak

© Jakubisko Film
Slovenská s.r.o., Jakubisko
Film s.r.o., Film and
Music Entertainment Ltd., Eurofilm Studio
Kft., Česká televize,
Slovenská televízia

Production

Companies

Eurimages, Ministry of
Culture of the Slovak
Republic, Ministry of
Culture of the Czech
Republic, Czech
Television in association
with Slovak Television and Invicta Capital,
Jakubisko Film Slovakia, Jakubisko Film, Film
and Music
Entertainment, Eurofilm
Studio present a Juraj
Jakubisko film
The film was supported
by Eurimages,
Ministerstvo Kultury
Slovenskej
Republiky/Ministry of
Culture of the Slovak
Republic, Státní fond
České republiky pro
podporu a rozvoj České
kinematografie/State
Fund of the Czech
Republic

In co-operation with
Česká televize/Czech
Television, STV, Invicta
Capital
Executive Producer

Deana Jakubisková-

Horváthová

Co-producer

Eurofilm Studio:

Peter Miskolczi

Line Producer

Jakubisko Film Slovakia,
Jakubisko Film:
Kevan Van Thompson

Associate Producer

Jakubisko Film Slovakia,

Jakubisko Film:

Martin Spott

Production Managers

Czech TV Production:

Jiri Kostyr

Ivan Filus

Petr Splichal

Roman Bartoňík

Heads of Development

Czech TV Production:

Ivan Hubac

Slovak TV Production:

Dana Garguláková

Production

Co-ordinators

Petr Taclová

Markéta Porubová

Ivana Bubková

Petr Wágner

UK:

Hannah Longbottom

Production

Accountant

Eva Nietschová

Location Managers

SK:

Vlado Magál

CZ:

Antonín Prazsky

Post-production

Supervisor

Cinepost:

Felix Nevela

Splinter Unit Director

Július Matula

Assistant Directors

1st: Biser A. Arichtay

Set 1st: Tomáš Pavlacky

2nd: Roman Janecka

Set 2nd: Martin

Pavlacky

Continuity Supervisor

Barbora Červenková

Casting

Jessica Horváthová

Lucy Bevan

Ingrid Hodálová

Additional Script:

Material Written by

John Paul Chapple

Pavel Krumpář

Stephen Jeffreys

Barbora Červenková

Jiri Reichel

Simon Pellar

Martin Daniel

Lubomír Feldek

Martin Spott

Alexandra Buchler

Steadicam Operator

Filip Halaska

Gaffers

Vladimír Holznecht

Gusto Čížek

Václav Kovárik

Key Grips

Michal Procházka

Splinter Unit:

Ota Kobylák

Visual Effects

Supervisor

Karel Spindler

Set Special Effects

Supervisor

Alexander Mucha

Film Edited by

Christopher Blunden

Patrik Pass

Juraj Jakubisko

Associate Editor

Emil Pawinger

Painted by

[Written, Directed &

Painted by]

Juraj Jakubisko

Set Designers

Karel Vacek

Jan Zázvorka

Jan Kodéra

Set Decoration

Jiri Macke

Jan Kodéra

Key Decorators

Jan Dvorák

Martin Mika

Václav Šebek

Stanislav Černy

Prop Master

Jan Kodéra

Head of Construction

Luděk Pokorný

Costume Designer

Jaroslava Pecharová

Hair/Make-up

Designer

Jana Radlová

Hairdresser/Make-up

Artist

Ivo Strangmüller

Special Effects

Make-up Artist

René Stejskal

Key Hair Stylist

Suzanne Stokes-

Munton

Hair/Wigs

Bohumil Sobotka

Additional Music

Tatiana Miková

Andrej Turok

Igriczk

Music Recorded with

Czech National

Symphony Orchestra

Studio Symphony

Orchestra

City of Prague

Philharmonic Orchestra

Prague Singers Chorus

Eva Nietschová

Solo Viola

Jiří Zigmund

Solo Sopranos

Zuzana Lapošková

Gábina Urbánková

Conductors

David Firman

Leos Sávoryský

Jan Chalupecký

Richard Hain

Stanislav Vavřinek

Prague Singers Chorus

Stanislav Mistr

Music Orchestrated by

Jan Jirásek

David Firman

Tatiana Miková

Andrej Turok

Sound Designers

Martin Maryska

Jon Johnson

Set Sound Recordists

Igor Pokorný

Tomáš Bělohradský

Karel Martínek

Re-recording Mixers

Patrick Cycone Jr

Elliot Tyson

Slovak/Czech Version

Mixed by

Martin Jilek

Supervising Sound

Editors

USA:

Jon Johnson

Martin Maryska

Sandy Gandler

UK:

Matthew Skelding

Stunt Co-ordinator

Jiří Kuba

Battle Scenes

Roman Spácl

Historical Consultants

Gábor Várkonyi

Tünde Lengyelová

Pavel Haban

Pavel Málá

Cyril (9 years)

Ester Honysová

Anna

Katarína I. Hanzelová

Katalin

Anicka Jurková

Erzsébet (9 years)

Martin Cerca

Ferenc (18 years)

Dolby Digital

Colour by

Barrandov Film

Laboratories

[2.35:1]

Distributor

Metrodome Distribution

Ltd

Marek Vasut

Bethlen

Michaela Drotárová

Erika

Beata Greneche

Ilona

Hana Vagnerová

Margita

Karel Dobry

royal guard commander

Vincenz Nicoli

Zsigmond Báthory

Pavel Kočí

István, footman

Pavel Boczársky

Pálffy

Jan Vlasák

Judge Sirmensiš

Zdeněk Maryska

Forenczy

Zuzana Frenglová

landlady

Jiří Hajdyla

Count Druet

Petr Jákl

bald hunchback

Derek Pavelcik

Pál

Ester Honysová

Anna

Marie Boková

Anna (4 years)

Gracie Friel

Katalin, the baby

Katerina Petrovová

Erzsébet (14 years)

Pavel Málá

Cyril (9 years)

Ester Honysová

Anna

Katarína I. Hanzelová

Katalin

Anicka Jurková

Erzsébet (9 years)

Martin Cerca

Ferenc (18 years)

Dolby Digital

Colour by

Barrandov Film

Laboratories

[2.35:1]

Distributor

Metrodome Distribution

Ltd

12,634 ft +1 frame

Biutiful

Mexico/Spain/

United Kingdom 2009

Director: Alejandro

González Iñárritu

With Javier Bardem, Maricel

Álvarez, Eduard Fernández

Certificate 15 147m 27s

suburbs of Santa Coloma and Badalona – are far removed from the art-deco tourist hotspots of the Catalan capital. Bardem dominates the film in a way that none of González Iñárritu's previous characters – not even the alluring Gael García Bernal in *Amores perros* (2000) – have managed. He is rarely off screen, and the probing close-ups of his drawn features underline the tragic dimensions of a tale in which the split-second decision to save a few euros on a heater has horrific consequences for the Chinese labourers

Uxbal ostensibly watches over. This is a tragedy in the classical sense of the term, with a protagonist at its centre who is both an agent and victim of his own misfortune. Events unravel with a grim inevitability, and with a supporting cast of seers, hedonists and children caught in the family crossfire; Marambra (a bundle of nerves, self-loathing and vulnerability in Argentine stage actress Maricel Alvarez's impeccable performance) is a contemporary Cassandra whose insights are tempered by insanity.

The transition from plot- to character-driven cinema has not involved the jettisoning of the Mexican filmmaker's habitual traits and motifs. As in *Babel*, the ethics of the global economy, transnationalism and the policing of the border again feature as recurring themes; the image of regeneration and renewal offered by the flock of birds circling over Sean Penn's dying Paul in *25 Grams* (2003) is deployed at a similar crisis point for Uxbal. Saturated colour, grainy textures and a swinging camera – coming into its own during a pulsating action sequence that sees traders pursued by police across the city centre – continue to shape the visual palette; distressed interiors evoke Nan Goldin's disarming photographs. Time again expands and contracts to accommodate the otherworldly (as in the film's opening sequence, when the dying – or dead – Uxbal is brought face to face with his long-dead father in a snow-covered forest). And while the subplot concerning the death of the Chinese workers remains an unnecessary digression, *Biutiful* is González Iñárritu's most accomplished film to date: a sombre, moving tale of atonement played out across the rapacious economic realities of globalisation.

♦ Maria Delgado

SYNOPSIS Barcelona, the present. Uxbal, who is dying of prostate cancer, seeks to be a good father to his children Ana and Mateo. He ekes out a living by managing networks of illegal immigrant traders who peddle their wares on the streets or work long hours in the rag and construction trades. He also has a sideline as a psychic



The pain in Spain: Javier Bardem

CREDITS

Directed by
Alejandro González
Iñárritu

Produced by
Alejandro González
Iñárritu

Written by
Alejandro González
Iñárritu

Armando Bo
Nicolás Giacobone
Based on a story by

Alejandro González
Iñárritu

Director of
Photography
Rodrigo Prieto

Editing

Stephen Mirrione
Art Director
Brigitte Broch

Music by
Music Performed by

Gustavo Santaolalla

©Menageatros S. de
R.L. de C.V., Mod
Producciones S.L. and
Ikiru Films S.L.

Production

Companies
Menage Atroz, Mexico
MOD Producciones,
Spain in association with

Focus Features
International and the
participation of

Televisión Española
A film by Alejandro
González Iñárritu

With the collaboration of
ICAA, Ministerio de
Cultura

With the participation of
Televisió de Catalunya
In co-production with

Ikiru Films (Edmon
Roch)

A co-production
between Menage Atroz,
Mod Producciones and
Ikiru Films

Co-producers

Sandra Hermida
Ann Ruark

Associate Producers
Alfonso Cuaron
Guillermo del Toro

Unit Production
Manager
Ann Ruark

Production Manager
Sandra Hermida

Production

Supervisors
Nico Tapia

Plaza Cataluña:
Raquel Saera
Production
Guillermo Vidal-Folch
Almudena Cormenzana

For AGI:
Priscila Armesca
Financial Controller
Mark Beaumont

Production
Accountant
Laura Mateos

Location Manager
Juan Reguera
Post-production

Supervisors
Marian Brozio
US:
Michael Tinger

Assistant Directors
1st: Javier Soto
2nd: Olga Pujalte

2nd: Andrés Curbelo
2nd: Mamen Zahonero

Plaza Cataluña
1st: Gerard Verdaguera

Script Supervisor
Nuria Casanueva
Casting Directors

Eva Leira
Yolanda Serrano
Casting Spain

Leira y Serrano Casting
Casting China

Rosanna Ng
Casting France

Hervé Jakubowicz
B Camera Directors

of Photography
Daniel Aranyó
Navarra:

B: David Acereto
Camera Operators

B: Daniel Aranyó
Navarra

B: David Acereto
Special Scenes

Oscar Faura
Albert Carreras
Severine Woxholt

Albert Pascual
Gaffer

José Luis Rodríguez
Special Visual Effects

El Ranchito
Special Effects

Supervisor

Pau Costa
Special Effects

Efe X Efectos Especiales

Set Designers

Marina Pozanco
Sylvia Steinbrecht

Set Decorators

Laura Musso
Joan Sabaté
Luisa Ferré

Properties

Esther García Alonso

Montse Soler
Property Master
Héctor Gil
Construction Manager
Ricard Vallverdú

Costumes
Paco Delgado
Make-up

Alessandro Bertolazzi
Special Make-up

Effects
DDT Efectos Especiales

Supervisors:
David Martí
Montse Ribé

Hairdresser
Manolo García

Titles
Laser Pacific

End Roller
Scarlet Letters

Additional Music
Performances

Aníbal Kerpel
Alejandro González

Plaza Cataluña
1st: Gerard Verdaguera

Script Supervisor
Nuria Casanueva

Casting Directors
Eva Leira
Yolanda Serrano

Casting Spain
Leira y Serrano Casting

Casting China
Rosanna Ng

Casting France
Hervé Jakubowicz

B Camera Directors

of Photography
Daniel Aranyó

Navarra:

B: David Acereto

Camera Operators

B: Daniel Aranyó
Navarra

B: David Acereto
Special Scenes

Oscar Faura

Albert Carreras

Severine Woxholt

Albert Pascual

Gaffer

José Luis Rodríguez

Special Visual Effects

El Ranchito

Special Effects

Supervisor

Pau Costa

Special Effects

Efe X Efectos Especiales

Set Designers

Marina Pozanco

Sylvia Steinbrecht

Set Decorators

Laura Musso

Joan Sabaté

Luisa Ferré

Properties

Esther García Alonso

CAST

Javier Bardem
Uxbal
Marcel Álvarez
Marambra
Eduard Fernández
Tito
Diaryatou Daff
Igé
Cheick Ndiaye
Ekweme
Cheng Taisheng
Hai
Luo Jin
Liwei
Hanaa Bouchaib
Ana
Guillermo Estrella
Mateo
Samuel George
Chubuiwem
Chukwumah
Samuel
Li Lang Sofia Lin
Li
Yodian Yang
obese Chinese man
Tuo Lin
bartender at Hai's bar
Xueheng Chen
Chinese man in cellar
Zhang Xiaoyan
Jung
Ye Allie
Hai's father
Xianlin Bao
Hai's mother
Ana Wagener
Bea
Rubén Ochandiano
Zanc
Karra Elejalde
Mendoza
Nasser Saleh
Iad
Tomás del Estal
mourning man
Ángel Luis Arjona
dead boy
Dolores Echeparas
woman at funeral
Adelfa Calvo
large woman
Manuel Solo
doctor
Violeta Pérez
nurse
Germán Almendros
surgeon 1
Isaak Alcaide
surgeon 2
Nacho Moliné
surgeon 3
Carmen La Lata
old woman
Annabel Totusaus
secretary
Eduardo Gómez
half-naked man
Ramón Elies
cemetery worker 1
Juan Vicente Sánchez
cemetery worker 2
Félix Cubero
bureaucrat
Ma. Carmen Peleteiro
waitress
Federico Muñoz
major
Leticia Albizuri
young girl 2
María Casado
newsreader
Judith Huertas
news reporter
Aroa Ortiz
Victoria M. Díaz
Sonia Cruz
Sophie Evans
Luna Jiménez
Colindres
Dunia Montenegro
Rodica Ioana
Ungureanu
strip club dancers

DTS

In Colour

[1.85:1]

Subtitles

Distributor

Optimum Releasing

Film Stunts

13,270 ft +0 frames

Black Swan

USA 2010

Director: Darren Aronofsky

With: Natalie Portman, Vincent

Cassel, Mila Kunis, Barbara Hershey

Certificate: 15 107m 59s

Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger's 1948 ballet film *The Red Shoes* set the bar pretty high for anguished melodrama *en pointe*, and it's taken 62 years for anyone to attempt anything similar. Now Darren Aronofsky has delivered a movie so compellingly deranged and deliciously overwrought that it makes the earlier film look like *Angelina Ballerina*.

His twist is to turn the life-versus-art topos into a creepy thriller, with Natalie Portman as Nina, the repressed perfectionist haunted by the spectre of desire. The entropic life-force is anathema to her sense of self, which is defined by the discipline, detail and control her ballet training has required; now she finds she must embrace her own potential for chaos in order to achieve the ultimate artistic expressivity needed to dance the lead in 'Swan Lake' and embody both the Swan Queen and her dark alter ego, the Black Swan.

Nina's determination to unlock her demons is balanced by her terror of what they might do once unleashed; and her paralysed frustration becomes focused on a rival dancer, Lily (Mila Kunis), whose effortless sensuality seems to mock her own tortured frigidity. Between their love-hate friendship, and Nina's equally difficult relationships with her controlling mother Erica (Barbara Hershey), the company's alpha-male artistic director Thomas (Vincent Cassel) and usurped older dancer Beth (Winona Ryder), she spirals downwards into a hell of paranoid hallucination in which she is persecuted above all by her own reflection, and by the transformations of a body that increasingly seems to have a mind of its own.

Overt references to the Powell and Pressburger film – most notably a shared obsession with mirrors – point up the thematic contrasts between the two pieces. While *The Red Shoes* insisted on the incompatibility of reality and art – Moira Shearer's dancer was forced to choose between ballet and marriage – *Black Swan* argues that neither is enough, and that the strict binary between life and art must be muddied by sexuality and danger in order to achieve perfection. In both cases, naturally, it's the artist who pays the price for attempting to smash opposites together, but while Powell's lusly fantastical ballet sequences took art off into the rarefied dreamsphere of pure imagination, Aronofsky's fidgety handheld camera, his stark, almost monotone palette and his raspy, all-too-intimate sound design bring Nina's suffering right up close. Add in his masterful handling of creeping menace and psychological tension and you have a film that gives the hair on the back of your neck a serious workout.

If Portman doesn't bag an Oscar she

will be justly aggrieved – it's a game-changingly good performance which bears all the Academy-friendly hallmarks of months of hard training (she performs most of the ballet sequences herself) and couldn't be a better riposte to the suspicion that her own talent, like Nina's, has tended towards the chilly and virginal, even when she's playing a stripper (as she did in Mike Nichols's *Closer* in 2004). Mila Kunis, though given less to play with in a more or less one-dimensional role, won't have done her career any harm either, lifting herself definitively out of her mainstream glamour-stooge rut. A revelatory turn from Winona Ryder as the maniacally bitter former star completes the trio of excellent female performances gracing a film that speaks, despite its boy-friendly thriller structure, to the abiding concerns of all 'women's pictures': bodily imperfection, impossible male expectation and the terror of old age. The inevitable blizzard of statuettes should not conceal the fact that this is in many ways a difficult, conflicted film which denies its audience any simple payoff and catapults them instead into a feverish, visceral but addictive world: that of Art with a capital A.  **Lisa Mullen**

CREDITS

Directed by
Darren Aronofsky

Produced by
Mike Medavoy
Arnold W. Messer

Brian Oliver
Scott Franklin

Screenplay
Mark Heyman
Andrés Heinz

John McLaughlin
Story
Andrés Heinz

Director of
Photography
Matthew Libatique

Film Editor
Andrew Weisblum

Production Designer
Thérèse DePrez

Original Score
Clint Mansell

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Production Companies
Fox Searchlight Pictures in association with Cross Creek Pictures

A Protozoa and Phoenix Pictures production

A film by Darren Aronofsky

Made in association with Dune Entertainment

Executive Producers
Bradley J. Fischer

Ari Handel
Tyler Thompson

Peter Fruchtman

Rick Schwartz

Jon Avnet

David Thwaites

Jennifer Roth

Co-producers
Joseph Reidy

Gerald Fruchtman

Associate Producer
Rose Garnett

Unit Production Manager

Jennifer Roth

Production Supervisor
Gabrielle Mahon

Production Co-ordinator
Lindsay Feldman

Production Accountant
Teddy Au

Location Manager
Ronnie Kupferwasser

Post-production Supervisor
Jeff Robinson

Assistant Directors
1st: Joseph Reidy

2nd: Amy Lauritsen

Script Supervisor
Anthony Pettine

Chief Lighting
Theatrical Unit: Lorrie MacDougall

Camera Operators
Stephen Consentino

Gaffers
Joseph Cicco

John G. Velez
Mo Flarn

Key Grip
Lamont Crawford

Visual Effects Supervisor
Dan Schrecker

Visual Effects Producer
Colleen Bachman

Visual Effects by
Look Effects, Inc

Technicolor
Club Images

Manipulated/Designed by
Ray Lewis

Special Effects Co-ordinator
Conrad Brink

Art Director
David Stein

Set Decorator
Tora Peterson

Property Master
Daniel Fisher

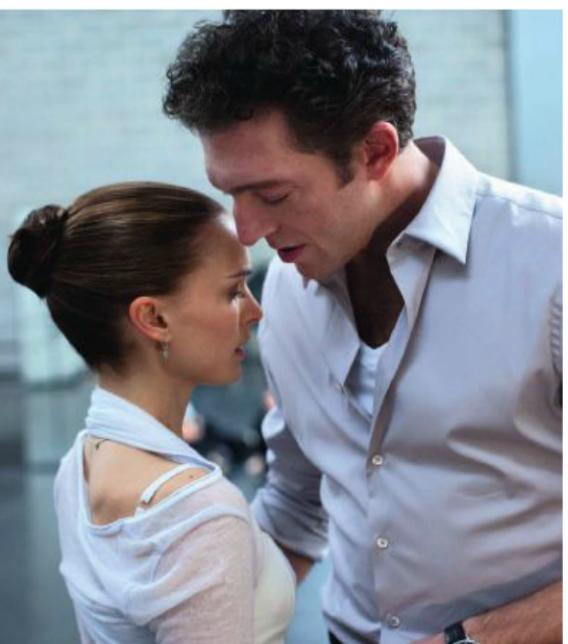
Construction Co-ordinator
Richard Tenewitz

Costume Designer
Amy Westcott

Ballet Costumes Designed by
Rodarte

Costume Supervisor
Jennifer Ingram

Make-up Design
Judy Chin



It takes two to tutu: Natalie Portman, Vincent Cassel

Make-up Department

Head

Margie Durand

Hair Design

Paul LeBlanc

Hair Department Head

Geordie Sheffer

Main/End Titles

Designed by

Jeremy Dawson

Jeff Kryvicky

Music from "Swan Lake"

Composed by:

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Adapted/Arranged by:

Clint Mansell

Matt Dunkley

Solo Violin

Rolf Wilson

John Bradbury

Score Conducted/Orchestrated by

Matt Dunkley

Music Supervisors

Jim Black

Gabe Hilfer

Soundtrack

"Apotheosis" – Pete

Min; "Danika Jane"

"Electric Hands"; "The

Nina Frequency" – The

Chemical Brothers;

"Phobos" – Lorn; "The

White Easton" – Al

Tourettes; "Illicit

Dreaming" – Kavsrave;

"Dark Synet" – Jakes

All tracks contain "Swan

Lake" by Pyotr Ilyich

Tchaikovsky

Music Consultant

Chris Benstead

Sound Designers

Brian Emrich

Craig Henighan

Ballet Choreography

Benjamin Millepied

On-set Ballet Consultant

Olga Kostritzky

Ballet Consultants

Francesca Harper

Megan Fairchild

Tyler Peck

Heather Watts

Gillian Murphy

Gavin Fitzpatrick

Julie Kent

Production Sound Mixer

Ken Ishii

Re-recording Mixers

Dominick Tavela

Craig Henighan

Supervising Sound Editor

Craig Henighan

Stunt Co-ordinator

Douglas Crosby

CAST

Natalie Portman

Nina Sayers, "The Swan Queen"

Vincent Cassel

Thomas Leroy, "The Gentleman"

Mila Kunis

Lily, "The Black Swan"

Barbara Hershey

Erica Sayers, "The Queen"

Winona Ryder

Beth MacIntyre, "The Dying Swan"

Arkadiy Figlin
piano player
Timothy Fain
violin player
Sarah Lane
lady in the lane
Liam Flaherty
man in stall
Patrick Heusinger
rich gent
Marina Stavitskaya
Christine Redpath
Olga Kostritzky
Alexandra Damiani
ballet mistresses
Rebecca Azenberg
Rachel Jambois
Laura Bowman
Ryoko Sadoshima
Holly L. Fusco
Kaia A. Tack
Abigail Menter
Lauren Fadeley
Brette Vance
Sarah Hay
Lillian Di Piazza
Adrianna de Svastich
Megan Dickinson
Jamie Wolf
Jessy Hendrickson
Carrie Lee Riggins
Genevieve Lebeau
Gina Artese
corps de ballet

Dolby Digital/SDDS
Colour by
Technicolor
Prints by
DeLuxe
[2.35:1]

Distributor
20th Century Fox International (UK)

9,718 ft +8 frames

Blue Valentine

Director: Derek Cianfrance
With Ryan Gosling, Michelle Williams, John Doman, Mike Vogel

A critical hit at last year's Sundance, Derek Cianfrance's *Blue Valentine* follows, in a twin narrative that charts the early and later stages of their relationship, the breakdown of a marriage between two young working-class Americans, nurse Cindy (Michelle Williams) and the feckless if warm-hearted Dean (Ryan Gosling).

It's territory that has of course been tackled before, from John Cassavetes's *Faces* (1968) and Ingmar Bergman's harrowing *Scenes from a Marriage* (1973), through Andrzej Zulawski's uncategorisable *Possession* (1981) and François Ozon's told-in-reverse *5x2* (2004). *Blue Valentine* sits most obviously in the post-Cassavetes mould, for though developed over more than a decade by a determined Cianfrance and carefully structured in a way that belies its deceptive looseness, the film is firstly an actor's piece – a two-hander between Williams and Gosling, who both deliver truthful, committed performances, explored through improvised dialogue and action.

The dissolution of a relationship is an enticing draw for an actor, since it inevitably allows for extremes of mood and physicality, and licences highly wrought exchanges. One response has been to describe the film as an extended actors' workshop session – certainly at times it cries out for a tighter script. Gosling, though affecting as Dean, falls prey to certain traps, scene-grabbing with a dramatic action, or repeating a



End of the line: Michelle Williams

line again and again as though fearful of silence, where Williams shows more relaxed confidence to simply 'be' on screen. But then Gosling's character Dean is also a bit of a performer, deluding himself that life can be traversed with little more than an easygoing nature. The scenes of the early days of their relationship allow for some spirited improvising: one in which Dean plays ukulele while Cindy dances in a shop doorway might be seen as either sweetly touching or cloyingly twee depending on your own reflex.

As Cianfrance cuts back and forth and we see their relationship unfold in a kind of narrative mosaic, Cindy and Dean are shown to have been temperamentally mismatched from the start. She has ambitions to be a doctor, while he is content to drift despite his potential, convinced of the 'virtue' of blue-collar work. But Cianfrance builds a believable background to explain why Cindy would choose Dean for his basic kindness, showing us the scars of her past through subtly crafted scenes (co-written with Cami Delavigne, warding off accusations that *Blue Valentine* is seen from a solely male perspective) of her at home with her unhappily married parents.

Cinematographer Andrij Parekh shoots the breakup scenes on digital cameras in intense close-ups, which lend a cold immediacy and reflect the suffocating state of the couple's relationship; in contrast, the courtship scenes are typically shot wider on super 16mm, giving them a warmth that matches the nostalgic glow of memory.

Unlike, say, Bergman with *Scenes from a Marriage*, there's little sense that Cianfrance is laying himself bare and exposing awkward universal truths, and the film ultimately lacks that extra potent charge. But if *Blue Valentine* may finally amount to a well-observed and bravely acted depiction of modern marriage, it is rather too knowingly constructed to really resonate in a searingly truthful way. And yet it is at the least a welcome example of a young American filmmaker attempting to probe life and relationships with more boldness and acuity than such superficially similar self-consciously kooky indie fare as *500 Days of Summer*.

• **James Bell**

Credits for this film were unavailable at the time of going to press and will be published in the March issue.

SYNOPSIS US, the present. Nina, a dancer with a New York City ballet, is a dedicated perfectionist but has never quite made it to the top, and soon will be too old to do so. When artistic director Thomas gives her the lead in 'Swan Lake', she determines to give the part her all. Thomas has only one reservation about Nina: though she's perfect as the innocent Swan Queen, she seems too pure and childlike to make the transformation into her alter ego, the Black Swan, which is the ballet's denouement demands.

Thomas goads Nina with seductive advances, but it's her relationship with understudy and rival Lily – who effortlessly embodies the wild sensuality Nina lacks – that has a transformative effect. Nina's jealousy and desire – mixed with guilt over the attempted suicide of an older dancer, Beth, whom she has usurped as the company's star performer – begin to manifest themselves in increasingly frightening hallucinations, and in lesions that start to look like feathers sprouting from her skin. Almost at the point of psychosis, Nina murders Lily on opening night, stabbing her with a piece of smashed mirror-glass. Hiding the corpse and dancing a triumphant first half, Nina returns to the dressing room to find Lily's body gone: instead she discovers a wound in her own belly, and realises she has stabbed herself. Rapidly losing blood, she returns to the stage and gives a mesmerising performance as the dying swan, experiencing a moment of pure perfection just before she dies.

SYNOPSIS US, the present. Married couple Dean and Cindy live with their young daughter Frankie in the Pennsylvania countryside. Cindy works in a maternity ward in a hospital. In an effort to save their marriage, Dean arranges for Cindy's father to look after Frankie while he takes Cindy to a 'love hotel'. However, as we later see, the evening sours and ultimately marks the end of the marriage.

The film shows in flashback the time when Dean and Cindy first met, while living in Brooklyn roughly six years earlier. Cindy is a medical student dating fellow student Bobby, and Dean is working as a removal man. They meet by chance at the old people's home where Cindy's beloved grandmother is a patient.

The film cuts back and forth in time, contrasting the excitement of their courtship with the unhappy state of their marriage in the present. Flashback scenes show Bobby ambushing Dean and beating him up. Cindy falls unexpectedly pregnant, and tells Dean the baby is his. She decides to have an abortion but changes her mind during the procedure. Dean tells her they will be a family, and they marry. We also see Cindy at home with her parents; she has a difficult relationship with her violent-tempered father.

Back in the present, Cindy leaves Dean sleeping at the love hotel. He later angrily confronts her at her work. They drive to collect Frankie from Cindy's father's house, and Cindy tells Dean she wants a divorce.

Brighton Rock

France/United Kingdom 2010

Director: Rowan Joffe

With Sam Riley,
Andrea Riseborough, Andy Serkis

Certificate 15 110m 51s

And it was all going rather well too. In some quarters Rowan Joffe's *Brighton Rock* has been attacked for not being the Boultings' version of 1947, and Sam Riley (Ian Curtis in Anton Corbijn's *Control*) for not being Richard Attenborough. But as Joffe has always made clear, this isn't a remake of the Boultings' film; it's a new adaptation of Graham Greene's 1938 novel. And as such it works well enough on its own terms. Until it doesn't.

In some ways Joffe's screenplay improves on Greene's original, tying the various relationships closer together. Ida Arnold, the avenging fury determined to track down the killers of the hapless Fred Hale, is no longer just a woman he meets by chance in a pub, but his friend and ex-lover, as well as proprietress of the café where Rose, the girl who gets involved with Hale's teenage killer Pinkie, works as a waitress. Too much coincidence? Perhaps, but it reinforces the sense of Brighton's demi-monde as a dangerously claustrophobic world where one action can set up tremors along a whole web of near-incestuous relationships.

Joffe unashamedly plays up the story's elements of *noirish* melodrama, abetted by Martin Phipps's tumultuous score. The sea is shot to look turbulent and oil-dark, and the camera swoops and plummets like a drunken seagull; one overhead clifftop shot of Rose and Pinkie is pure *Titanic*-style kitsch. The updating to 1964, year of the Mods and Rockers clashes, doesn't harm the narrative, and allows for a moment of incongruous humour – Pinkie, having stolen a scooter as a getaway vehicle, finds himself heading a Mod procession along the seafront – as well as enhancing the overall theme of futile violence. Sam Riley, less scarily dead-eyed than Attenborough but more broodingly malicious, makes an effective Pinkie, while Andrea Riseborough brings a welcome hint of steel to the potentially over-passive role of Rose. They're backed by a practised cast of quality British acting: Helen Mirren as Ida, Phil Davis, John Hurt and, in a smoothly malevolent cameo, Andy Serkis as gang boss Colleoni.

The film features, but mostly doesn't overplay, the novel's warped brand of Catholicism: both Rose and Pinkie are Catholics and Pinkie, like his creator, finds it easier to believe in hell than in heaven. But it's this strand that finally sinks Joffe's movie. After Pinkie has married Rose to make sure she can't testify against him, she sees a 'record-your-voice' machine on the pier and asks him to make a recording for her. He records a message saying how much he loathes her. In the novel, Greene has Rose going home after Pinkie's violent death to play the record for the first time. "She walked rapidly in the thin

SYNOPSIS Brighton, 1964. Smalltime gang-leader Kite is killed by members of a rival gang. Kite's protégé, 17-year-old Pinkie Brown, arrives too late to save him but recognises one of his attackers, Fred Hale. He reports back to the other gang members, Spicer, Dallow and Cubitt. Pinkie corners Hale in a pub toilet, but Hale evades him; leaving the pub, Hale encounters an old friend, Ida Arnold, owner of Snow's Café. The gang chase Hale on to the pier, where he desperately tries to chat up a young woman, Rose. Spicer leads him away, but not before a pier photographer has snapped Rose, Hale and Spicer together. Beneath the pier, Pinkie smashes Hale's head in with a stone.

Pinkie seeks out Rose at Snow's Café, where she works as a waitress, and chats her up. He steals the pier photographer's claim-slip from her, obtains the picture and burns it, but realises that Rose still presents a danger since she could recognise Spicer. Pinkie and Dallow lean on a bookie, Corkery, who tells them he has protection from a rival gang led by Colleoni. Pinkie visits Colleoni at his hotel but stalls an invitation to join his gang. Ida, determined to find out what happened to Hale, questions Rose; in love with Pinkie, Rose admits nothing.

Spicer panics and demands that Pinkie should buy him out. Pinkie phones Colleoni and arranges to lure Spicer under the pier. Colleoni's men are waiting and attack Spicer but also turn on Pinkie; he escapes under cover of a riot between Mods and Rockers. When Spicer, badly injured, returns home, Pinkie kills him. To ensure that Rose can't testify against him, Pinkie marries her. Urged to record his voice for her, he records a message saying that she disgusts him.

Realising that Rose must be silenced, Pinkie takes her to a remote clifftop and proposes a suicide pact. Dallow, who likes Rose, brings Ida to the clifftop; in a struggle with Dallow, Pinkie falls to his death. Later, the pregnant Rose plays the record; it sticks on the words "You want me to say I love you."

June sunlight towards the worst horror of all" – the novel's final sentence.

The Boultings recoiled from Greene's bleakness. In their film the gramophone needle sticks on Pinkie's message ("You want me to say I love you – but I hate you") repeating "I love you – I love you – I love you," while the camera tilts up to a crucifix on the wall. The new film reproduces this cheaply sentimental resolution unchanged, complete with tilt to the crucifix and an angelic choir on the soundtrack. It's a major miscalculation – and makes ultimate nonsense of Joffe's claim not to be remaking the 1947 film.

♦ Philip Kemp

CREDITS

Directed by

Rowan Joffe

Produced by

Paul Webster

Written by

Rowan Joffe

Based on the novel by

Graham Greene

Director of

Photography

John Mathieson

Editor

Joe Walker

Production Designer

James Merifield

Music Composed by

Martin Phipps

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Film Council/BBC

Production

Companies

StudioCanal Features,

BBC Films & UK Film

Council present a Kudos

Pictures production

A film by Rowan Joffe

Made with the support

of the National Lottery

through the UK Film

Council's Development

Fund and Premiere

Fund

Executive Producers

Jenny Borgars

Will Clarke

Olivier Courson

Ron Halpern

Christine Langan

Jamie Laurenson

Co-producer

Paul Ritchie

Unit Production

Manager

Jacquie Glanville

Production

Co-ordinator

Mona Benjamin

Production

Accountant

John Miles

Location Manager

Jason Wheeler

Post-production

Supervisor

Neil Grimshaw

Assistant Directors

1st: Guy Heeley

2nd: Charlie Reed

2nd Unit

2nd: Anthony Wilcox

Script Supervisor

Paula Casarin

2nd Unit Continuity

Caroline Bowker

Casting

Shaheen Baig

2nd Unit Camera

Chris Plevin

Steadicam Operator

2nd Unit:

Paul Edwards

Gaffer

Alan Martin

Key Grip

Gary Hymns

Visual Effects

Filmgate

Additional:

Molinare – MFM VFX

Special Effects

Supervisor

Stuart Brisdon

Art Director

Paul Gherardi

Production Buyer

Deborah Wilson

Prop Master

Ray Perry

Construction Manager

Kevin Harris

Costume Designer

Julian Day

Wardrobe Supervisor

Jane Marcantonio

Hair/Make-up

Designer

Ivana Primorac

Make-up Artists

Kitty Greenwood

Lisa Wood

Title Design

Antony Buonomo

Additional Music

Composed by

Ruth Barrett

Felix Erskine

Music Performed by

BBC Concert Orchestra

Conductor:

Simon Phipps

Solo Cello:

Benjamin Hughes

Music Performed by

Chamber Orchestra of

London

Conductor:

Simon Whiteside

Solo Drums/

Percussion:

Paul Clarvis

Choirs

BBC Singers

Conductor:

James Morgan

Brighton Youth Festival

Choir

Conductor:

Esther Jones

Orchestration

Simon Whiteside

Music Supervisor

Ian Neil

Soundtrack

"I'll Never Stop Loving

You" – Doris Day; "I

Gotta Woman" – The

Black Knights; "Big

Noise from Winnetka" –

The Phipps Ensemble;

"Can't You See That

She's Mine" – The Dave

Clark Five; "There's a

Storm a Comin'" –

Richard Hawley

Sound Designer

Martin Cantwell

Location Sound

Recordist

Martin Trevis

Re-recording Mixers

Gareth Bull

Adam Mendez

Supervising Sound

Editor

Harry Barnes

Stunt Co-ordinator

Julian Spencer

CAST

Sam Riley

Pinkie Brown

Andrea Riseborough

Rose

Andy Serkis

Colleoni

John Hurt

Phil Corkery

Helen Mirren

Ida Arnold

Phil Davis

Spicer

Nonso Anozie

Dallow

Craig Parkinson

Cubitt

Sean Harris

Fred Hale

Geoff Bell

Kite

Steven Robertson

Crab

Maurice Roëves

chief inspector

Steve Evets

Mr Wilson

Francis Magee

pavement

photographer

Adrian Schiller

registrar

Pauline Melville

mother superior

Mona Goodwin

pretty girl

Kerrie Hayes

borstal girl 1

Lexy Howe

borstal girl 2

Harry Lloyd-Walker

child

Dennis Banks

barman

Dolby Digital

In Colour

[2.35:1]

Distributor

Optimum Releasing

9,976 ft +8 frames

Burlesque

USA 2010

Director: Steven Antin

With Cher, Christina Aguilera,

Eric Dane, Cam Gigandet

Certificate 12A 118m 50s

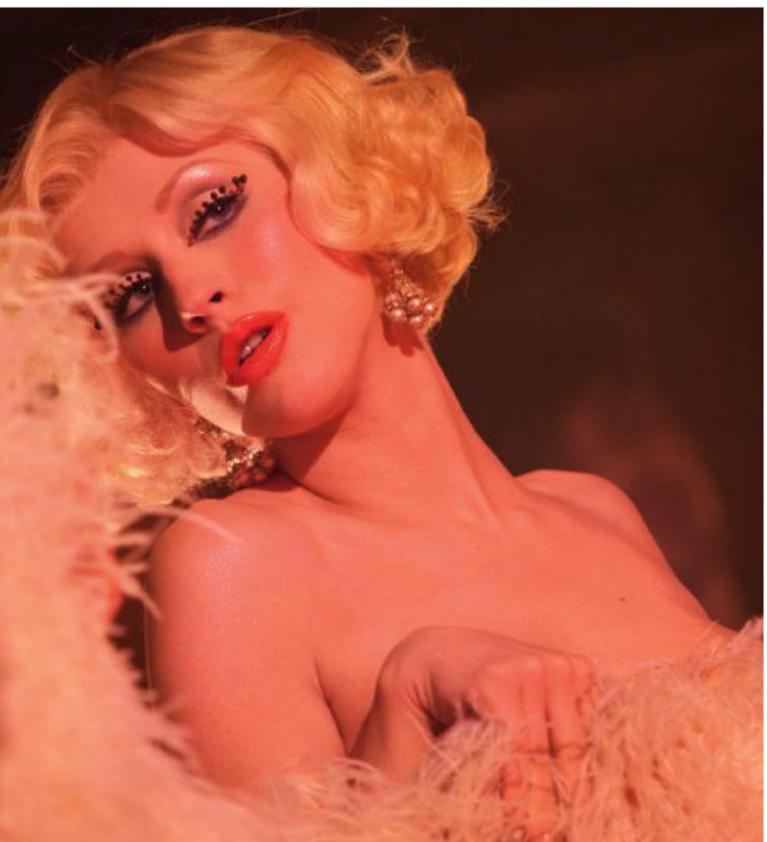
Burlesque, the story of an ingénue making it big to the chagrin of more established performers, is no *All about Eve* (1950). It's not even *Showgirls* (1995). If anything, its glossy insistence that dancing in a burlesque club is a fun, glamorous and unthreatening route to professional and romantic fulfilment recalls *Pretty Woman* (1990), another film best avoided by impressionable 12-year-old girls. *Burlesque* is a contentious form – liberating to some, reactionary to others – but it's not, as it's shown to be here, either sexless or a route to musical stardom.

Christina Aguilera has an undeniably powerful voice but she's not a very charismatic actor, and director Steven Antin's screenplay is little help. Aguilera's Ali is consummately talented and self-assured from the off: costume aside, there isn't much difference between her impromptu performance in an Iowa roadhouse at the movie's opening and her belting out the floodlit finale. When she goes west, she boards a bus and wakes up looking at the Hollywood sign; though slower, her ascent at the Burlesque Lounge run by Tess (Cher) is just as smooth and unsuspenseful.

The picture is bathed in a glow of banal glamour studded with crass touches, the appealingly lived-in Lounge hosting a raft of efficient, unmemorable production numbers and a few striking outfits. This workplace drama, set in a picturesque venue with a cast of dozens, could have made a satisfying cable television series, but it fails as a feature: too many one-note supporting characters, too little credible backstory and far too much clunky exposition. It even lacks the compensations of titillation, being too coy to show tits or ass and too simpering to contain any real malice: Ali's supposed nemesis Nikki (Kristen Bell) is never more than a sulking mediocrity and turns out to be a sweetie underneath it all.

Burlesque's lumpy banality gives extra piquancy to the moments that do tilt into full-blown super-camp. Its greatest asset on this front is Cher, who appears to have achieved through surgery the sort of eerie, inexpressive presence normally associated with Robert Zemeckis's motion-capture digital animation. As so often, the moment of purest camp is inexplicable. Tess returns from a meeting with the bank manager, tearfully fearing for the future of her club, she struggles to make herself clear. He wouldn't even look her in the eye, she says. He kept playing with that... that wooden thing on his desk. The wooden thing! The nameplate? "Yeah, the nameplate!" In a film whose general tone is tiresome over-determination, such moments of delicious absurdity are to be treasured.

♦ Ben Walters



Camp America: Christina Aguilera

CREDITS

Directed by
Steven Antin

Produced by
Donald De Line

Written by
Steven Antin

Director of Photography
Bojan Bazelli

Edited by
Virginia Katz

Production Designer
Jon Gary Steele

Music

Christophe Beck

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Production Companies

Screen Gems presents a De Line Pictures production

A film by Steven Antin

Executive Producers

Dana Belcastro
Stacy Kolker Cramer

Risa Shapiro

Associate Producers

Geoff Hansen

Bojan Bazelli

Unit Production Manager

Buddy Enright

Production Co-ordinator

Kate Kelly

Production Accountant

Terri Greening

Location Managers

Douglas Dresser

Brian O'Neill

Assistant Directors

1st: Geoff Hansen

2nd: Rosemary

Cremona

Script Supervisor

Wilma Garscadden

Gahret

Casting

John Papisidera

Lighting Design

Jules Fisher

Peggy Eisenhauer

Theatrical Lighting Supervisors

David Davidian

Harry Sangmeister

Camera Operators

A: Patrick Loungway
B: Colin Hudson

C: Chris Moseley

D: Paul Sanchez

Chief Lighting Technician

Anthony G.

Nakonechnyj

Theatrical Lighting Gaffer

Richard Mortell

Key Grip

Joseph Diania

Visual Effects

Zoic Studios

Special Effects

Supervisors:

John Frazier

Tommy Frazier

Co-ordinators:

Richard O. Helmer

Jeff Wischnack

Musical Sequences

Edited by

David Checal

Art Director

Chris Cornwell

Set Designers

Patte Strong-Lord

Jim Tocci

Set Decorator

Dena Roth

Property Master

Ellen Freund

Construction Co-ordinator

David Elliott

Costume Designer

Michael Kaplan

Costume Supervisor

Lynda Foote

Make-up Department Head

Cindy Williams

Key Make-up Artist

Amy Schmiederer

Hair Department Head

Martin Samuel

Hair Stylists

Natasha Allegro

Barbara Cantu

Jasmine Kimble

Vickie Mynes

Titles

Picture Mill

Score Conducted by

Pete Anthony

Orchestrations

Douglas Romayne

Music Supervisor

Buck Damon

Executive Music Producer

Christina Aguilera

Soundtrack

"Makin' Plans" –

Miranda Lambert; "The

Beautiful People (from

Burlesque);

"Something's Got a

Hold on Me"; "Nasty

Naughty Boy"; "Guy

What Takes His Time";

"But I Am a Good Girl

(from *Burlesque*);

"Express"; "Bound to

You"; "Show Me How

You Burlesque" –

Christina Aguilera;

"Don't Touch" – Chris

Phillips; The Fireside

Orchestra; "Poor Boys

Blues"; "Verdi Mart

Shuffle"; "That

Fascinating Thing";

"Curly's Blues"; "Suits

Are Picking Up the Bill";

"Sitting Pretty" – Chris

Phillips; The Squirrel Nut

Zipper Orchestra;

"Black Bottom Stomp";

"New Orleans Bump" –

Wynton Marsalis; "Long

John Blues" – Megan

Mullally; "Welcome to

Burlesque (Tango)" –

"Welcome to Burlesque

(Instrumental)"; "My

Drag"; "Welcome to

Burlesque"; "You

Haven't Seen the Last of

Me" – Cher; "Diamonds

Are a Girl's Best Friend

(Swing Cats Mix)" –

Marilyn Monroe; Jane

Russell, outro

performed by Christina

Aguilera; "Wagon Wheel

Watusi" from *Baby the Rain Must Fall* by Elmer

Bernstein; "Tough

Lover" – (1) Etta James,

(2) Christina Aguilera;

"Knock You Down" –

Keri Hilson; "Jungle

Berlin" by Joey Altruda;

"Ray of Light" –

Madonna; "Guy What

Takes His Time

(Instrumental)";

"Animal" – Neon Trees;

"Forever Young" –

Alphaville; "Hot Stuff" –

Donna Summer; "I Met

With You" – Modern

English; "Danke

Schoen" – Wayne

Newton; "More Than a Feeling" – Boston; "Fade into You" – Mazzy Star

Choreography

Denise Faye

Joey Pizzi

Production Mixer

David R.B. MacMillan

Re-recording Mixers

Andy Koyama

Chris Carpenter

Bill W. Benton

Supervising Sound Editor

Richard Yawn

Stunt Co-ordinators

Chad Randall

Troy Gilbert

CAST

Cher

Tess

Christina Aguilera

Ali Rose

Eric Dane

Marcus Gerber

Cam Gigandet

Jack

Julianne Hough

Georgia

Alan Cumming

Alexis

Peter Gallagher

Vince Scali

Kristen Bell

Nikki

Stanley Tucci

Sean

Dianna Agron

Natalie

Glynn Turman

Harold Saint

David Walton

Mark the DJ

Terrence Jenkins

Dave

Chelsea Traille

Coco

Tanea McCall

Scarlett

Tyne Stecklein

Jesse

Paula Van Oppen

Anna

Isabella Hofmann

Loretta

James Brolin

Mr Anderson

Stephen Lee

Dwight

Denise Faye

Preacher

Baldeep Singh

Ali's hotel manager

Michael Landes

Greg

Wendy Benson

Marla

Tisha French

loft assistant

Katerina Mikailenko

Brittany

Jay Luchs

party guest at Marcus'

house

Katelynn Tilley

ditzy waitress

Gwen Van Dam

curler woman at Grundy

bus stop

Catherine Natale

curler woman's friend

Jonathon Trent

Damon, Bumper Band

Blair Redford

James, Bumper Band

Taylor Graves

member

Adam Driggs

Alvino Lewis

Jimmy R.O. Smith

Leah Katz

Bumper Band

members

Melanie Lewis

Sarah Mitchell

Tara Nicole Hughes

Aisha Francis

Deanna Walters

main dancers

Robert Kirkland

Alfred Thomas

Sean Van Der Wilt

Corey Anderson

Timor Steffens

Jaquel Knight

bartenders

Samantha Abrantes

Samantha Lee

Michelle Brooke

Jamie Lee Ruiz

Viktoria Shwartsman

Shannon Beach

contortionists

Jeskilz

Jenny Robinson

Talia-Lynn Prairie

Meredith Ostrowsky

Katrina Norman

McKee Duran

Ashley Ashida Dixon

Rachele Brooke Smith

SYNOPSIS Cambridge, during WW2. A painting at their uncle's home reminds Lucy and Edmund Pevensie of Narnia. It comes to life and transports them and their cousin Eustace into the Narnian sea. Caspian, the king of Narnia, takes them on board his ship the Dawn Treader; his crew includes mouse Reepicheep. Caspian is on a voyage to find the seven lost lords of Telmar, banished years earlier by his evil uncle Miraz. Caspian finds the first lord at an island ruled by slave traders who sacrifice Narnians to a mysterious green fog. All seven lords' swords must be used to conquer the mist – a blue star will lead the Dawn Treader. Further lords are found on other islands and their swords retrieved. Greedy Eustace is turned into a dragon while looting a dragon's hoard.

The blue star leads to Aslan's Table, where Caspian and the children find more lords and swords. The star appears in female form and tells them the seventh sword is nearby, where the green mist has gathered. The crew find the seventh lord in the green mist, which summons a sea monster to attack the Dawn Treader. Dragon Eustace is injured by the seventh sword. Aslan turns him back into a boy. Eustace takes the sword to Aslan's Table and places it with the other six. The mist disappears, and the sacrificed citizens reappear.

Caspian, Lucy, Edmund, Eustace and Reepicheep find the gateway to Aslan's country; Aslan tells them they can never return if they enter. Reepicheep alone decides to go. The children are returned to Cambridge.

CREDITS

Directed by

Michael Apted
Produced by

Mark Johnson

Andrew Adamson

Philip Steuer

Screenplay

Christopher Markus

Stephen McFeely

Michael Petroni

Based on the book by

C.S. Lewis

Director of

Photography

Dante Spinotti

Film Editor

Rick Shaine

Production Designer

Barry Robison

Music

David Arnold

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Production Companies

Fox 2000 Pictures and Walden Media present a

Mark Johnson

production

A Michael Apted film

Made in association with Dune

Entertainment

Produced with the

assistance of

Queensland

Government, Screen

Queensland

Executive Producers

Douglas Gresham

Perry Moore

Associate Producer

Cort Kristensen

Unit Production

Managers

Richard E. Chapla Jr

Jennifer Cornwell

Philip Steuer

2nd Unit Production

Co-ordinator

Angelique Badenoch

Financial Controllers

Thomas Uddel

Guy Barker

Location Manager

Gareth Price

Post-production

Producer

Jessie Thiele Schroeder

Australia Supervisor:

Ben Baker
2nd Unit Directed by

John Mahaffie

Assistant Directors

1st: Jeff Okabayashi

Key 2nd: Deb Antoniou

2nd Unit

1st: Brendan Campbell

2nd: Greg Spiller

Script Supervisors

Victoria Sullivan

2nd Unit:

Mimi Frecero

Casting

Christine King

Nina Gold

Camera Operators

B: Damian Wyvill

2nd Unit:

A: Peter McCaffrey

B: John Platt

Gaffers

Shaun Conway

2nd Unit:

Mark Jeffries

Key Grips

Toby Copping

2nd Unit:

Pat Nash

Visual Effects

Supervisor:

Angus Bickerton

2nd Unit Supervisor:

Dale Duguid

Producer:

Barrie Hemsley

Visual Effects by

MPG

Animation/Visual

Effects by

Framestore

Visual Effects by

The Senate Visual

Effects

Visual Effects/

Animation by

Cinesite Ltd.

Visual Effects by

The Mill

Motion Capture

Audiomotion Studios

Special Effects

Supervisor:

Brian Cox

On Set Supervisor:

Thomas Van Koeverden

Co-ordinators:

Bruce Bright

Leanne Brooks

Senior Model Makers

James Millett

Christopher Martin

David Dale

Mark Clearly

Model/Element

Photography

Victoria Hawden

Model Construction

Matte and Miniatures

Stereoscopic

Supervisor

Ed W. Marsh

Stereoscopic View-D

Conversion

Prime Focus Film

Additional Stereo

Conversion

Pixel Magic

Venture 3D

Trixter

Identity FX

Additional Editor

Steven Weisberg

Associate Editor

Christopher Lloyd

Supervising Art

Director

Ian Gracie

Art Directors

Karen Murphy

Mark Robins

Marco Niro

Set Designers

Christopher Tangney

Andrew Chan

Francisco Blanc

Set Decorator

Rebecca Cohen

Concept Artists

Min Yum

Greg Spalerka

Michele Moen

John Dickenson

Dorota Elzbieta

Sapinska

Justin Sweet

Vance Kovacs

Gerhard Mozzi

Evan Shipard

Greg Bridges

Annette Vandenberg

Construction

Co-ordinator

Bernie Childs

Construction Manager

Sean Ahern

Costume Designer

Isis Mussenden

Costume Supervisor

Elly Kamal

Make-up/Hair

Designer

Rick Findlater

Make-up/Hair

Supervisors

Jen Stanfield

2nd Unit:

Bronwyn Fitzgerald

Make-up Artists

Martina Byrne

Dennis Adolphe

Eva Bergstrom

Venita Abnett

2nd Unit:

Sharon Robbins

Special Make-up/

Creatures by

Howard Berger

Gregory Nicotero

KNB EFX Group, Inc

End Titles/Roller

Fugitive Studios

Additional Music

Michael Price

Score Orchestrated/

Conducted by

Nicholas Dodd

Soundtrack

"Langham Place" by

Eric Coates – The New

Symphony Orchestra:
"In the Mood" – Glenn Miller & His Orchestra;
"To Aslan's Camp" by Harry Gregson-Williams;
"There's a Place for Us" – Carrie Underwood
Sound Supervision/Design
Nigel Stone
Jimmy Boyle
Production Sound Mixers
Paul Brincat
2nd Unit:
Gavin Walmisley
Re-recording Mixers
Paul Massay
Michael Hedges
Stunt/Fight Co-ordinator
Allan Poppleton
Animal Wrangler
Katherine Brock
Film Extracts
The Chronicles of Narnia The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe (2005)
The Chronicles of Narnia Prince Caspian (2008)

Shane Rangi
Tavros
Arthur Angel
Rhince
Arabella Morton
Gael
Rachel Blakely
Gael's mum
Steven Rooke
faun
Tony Nixon
first mate
David Vallon
slave trader
Jared Robinsen
intake officer
Roy Billing
chief Dufflepud
Neil G. Young
Dufflepud 2
Greg Poppleton
Dufflepud 3
Nicholas Neild
Dufflepud 4
Nathaniel Parker
Caspian's father
Daniel Poole
young man
Mirko Grillini
Telmarine sailor
Ron Kelly
steward
Laurence Coy
photographer
Douglas Gresham
slaver 1
Michael Maguire
slaver 2
Catarina Hebbard
Gael's aunt
Tamat Rangi
minotaur
Lucas Ross
handsome soldier
Megan Hill
pretty young nurse
David Sachet
trader
Ross Price
first mate
Dolby Digital/DTS/
SDDS
In Colour
[2.35:1]
3D
Distributor
20th Century Fox International (UK)

10,129 ft +8 frames

Conviction

USA/United Kingdom 2010

Director: Tony Goldwyn

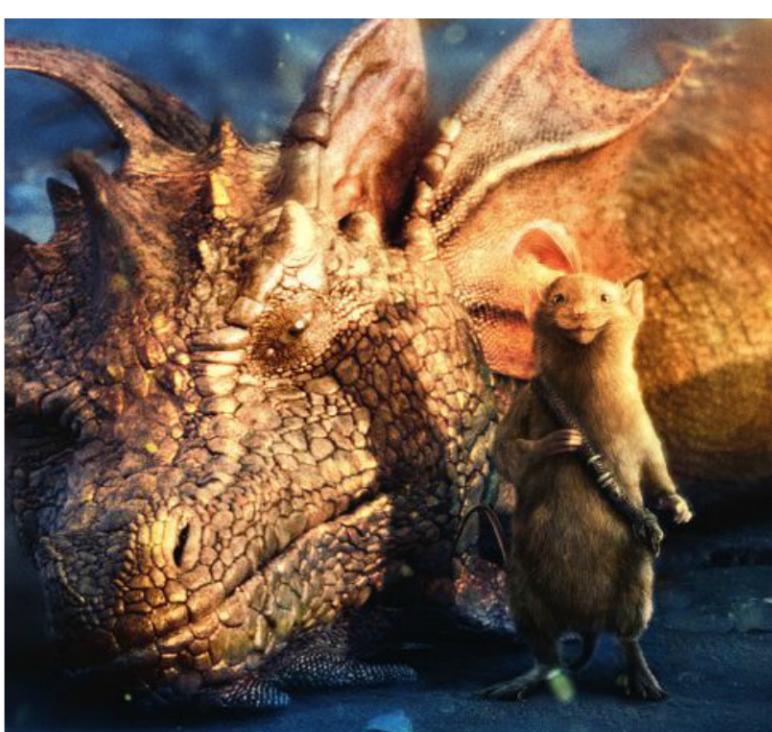
With Hilary Swank, Sam Rockwell, Minnie Driver, Melissa Leo

Certificate 15 106 m 59s

Even Hilary Swank, whose celebrated speciality to date has been portraying the set-jawed underdog in adversity in *Boys Don't Cry* (1999) and *Million Dollar Baby* (2004), can't light a fire under this dour, well-intentioned but plodding adaptation of the true-life quest of housewife Betty Anne Waters, who dedicated 18 years of her life to qualifying as a lawyer and releasing her brother Kenny from wrongful imprisonment for murder. While it's an extraordinary story on paper, the film is so very respectful of Betty's achievement, and so focused on pressing the audience's emotional buttons, that it rapidly becomes formulaic, like an outsize TV movie-of-the-week.

It's a film that constantly translates its heroic, Sisyphean story into manageable narrative chunks for fear of losing our interest (DP Adriano Goldman setting them in a succession of grittily believable New England locations, which belie the fact that the film was shot in Michigan). Screenwriter Pamela Gray, who crafted a similar 'inspirational true story' for Meryl Streep in *Music of the Heart* (1999), opts for a sentimental, story-shuffled chronology, sandwiching the sacrificial slog of Betty's years of legal study between flashbacks to her near-feral childhood with Kenny to establish their mutual devotion. Mixed in with these, rather more successfully, is a handful of scenes showing the adult Kenny's goofily drunken hot-headedness and hatred of authority. Sam Rockwell, whose big-hearted, brawling Kenny is the film's prime performance, is eminently watchable and palpably dangerous here, especially in a dancehall dispute that deftly traces the thin line between party animal and thug. Director Tony Goldwyn, an actor himself, also lets Rockwell off the leash in his prison scenes with Swank, where her unwavering devotion to him feels sincere but a tad one-note next to his volatile playing, which swings from elation to violent self-pity without pausing for breath.

In fact, were Swank's Betty not wound quite so tight, if her performance were less stoical and more ambivalent, one suspects the film would have loosened up usefully around her. One of the delights of *Erin Brockovich* (2000) was its heroine's tendency to dip into sharp-tongued comedy or sheer bad temper. By contrast, *Conviction's* efficient delineation of Betty as a never-say-die striver, in a story neatly calibrated so that every narrative victory is followed by a nail-biting setback (Kenny refusing a DNA test, for example, once the laborious and crucial search for the original evidence is successful), leaves its emotional texture feeling a little thin. Swank can deliver moving moments – there's a quietly upsetting



'The Chronicles of Narnia The Voyage of the Dawn Treader'

sequence when Betty's sons tire of her crusade and leave to live with their father, which literally brings her to her knees. But in a film full of juicy cameos, where Juliette Lewis's whiny, wily, trailer-trash girlfriend and Melissa Leo's granite-faced self-righteous cop make their scenes hum with interest, her tight-lipped portrayal suffers by comparison.

Goldwyn's focus often seems as unrelenting as his subject's, since the film firmly refuses to look outside the Waters' joint ordeal at the wider issues of class and the inequalities of the American legal system. Locked into its tidy, uplifting portrayal of hardscrabble heroism it eschews anything that won't fit its template (including the fact that the real-life Kenny Waters died in an accident mere months after his release) in its resolute pursuit of triumph out of tragedy. **KG** **Kate Stables**

CREDITS

Directed by
Tony Goldwyn
Produced by
Andrew Sigerman
Andrew S. Karsch
Tony Goldwyn
Written by
Pamela Gray
Director of Photography
Adriano Goldman
Edited by
Jay Cassidy
Production Designer
Mark Ricker
Music by/Piano
Performed by
Paul Cantelon

©Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation and Betty Anne Productions, LLC
Production Companies
Fox Searchlight Pictures presents in association with Omega Entertainment, Oceana Media Finance and Prescience an Andrew Sigerman production A Longfellow Pictures production A Tony Goldwyn film In association with Prescience Media 1 LLP, Prescience Media 2 LLP, Prescience Media 3 LLP, Prescience Media 4 LLP, Omni Films LLP, Pantheon Entertainment, Montage Media, Inc., Junction Films Developed in association with Working Title Films

Production services by The Media Cooperative
Executive Producers
Hilary Swank
Markus Barnetler
Alwyn Hight Kushner
James Smith
Anthony Callie
Myles Nestel
Co-producers
Ed Cathell III
Dana Claire
Unit Production Managers
Ed Cathell III
Jan Foster
Production Supervisor
Damien Lubaki
Production Co-ordinators
Jason Zorjigan
Boston Unit:
Kate Kelly
Production Accountant
Barbara Ann Stein
Location Managers
Tom Jacob
Cathy Thomas
Boston Unit:
Karen Stark
Additional Michigan Unit:
Chris-Teena Consta
Post-production Supervisor
Nancy Kirchofer
1st Assistant Directors
1st: Nick Mastandrea
2nd: Maria Martina
Additional Michigan Unit
1st: Jonathan Oliver
2nd: Jason Ivey
Script Supervisors
Sheila Waldron
Additional Michigan Unit:
Dru Anne Carlson
Casting
Kerry Barden

The sacrifice: Hilary Swank

Paul Schnee
Michigan:
Carrie Ray
Boston Unit Director of Photography
Andrew Dintenfass
Aerial Director of Photography/Operator
Boston Unit:
Brian Heller
B Camera Operator/Steadicam
Mark Karavite
Gaffer
Mark Castelaz
Key Grips
Mike Lewis
Boston Unit:
Brian Corbett
Additional Michigan Unit:
William B. MacLeod
Visual Effects
Entity FX
Associate Editor
Geraud Brisson
Art Director
Stephanie Gilliam
Set Decorator
Rena DeAngelo
Property Master
Jonathan Hodges
Construction Co-ordinator
Tyler Osman
Costume Designer
Wendy Chuck
Costume Supervisor
Dana Hart
Department Head Make-up
Vivian Baker

Key Make-up
Steven Anderson
Department Head Hair Stylist
Bonnie Clevering
Key Hair Stylist
Rita Parillo
Title Designer
Matthias Brauner
Score Conductor/Orchestrator
Milosz Jezioriski
Music Supervisor
Liz Gallacher
Soundtrack
"Whiskey in the Jar" – Chris Hewitt, David Bagnall; "Long Train Runnin'" – "My Sharona" – Andrew Fairgrieve, Robert Piela, Hunter Dixon, Chris Fichter; "Heaven and Hell" – Wild Colonials
Musical Advisers
Wolfram Koessel
Suzanna Peric
Production Sound Mixer
David Obermeyer
Additional Michigan Unit Sound Mixer
Curt Frisk
Re-recording Mixers
Max Rammmer-Rogall
Michael Hinreiner
Supervising Sound Editors
Christopher Barnett
Jörg Elsner
Stunt Co-ordinator
Rick LeFevour



SYNOPSIS Massachusetts, 1990. Barmaid and single mother Betty Anne Waters is struggling through law school, aiming to get her jailed brother Kenny freed on appeal.

In flashback we see Betty and Kenny's unhappy, foster-homed childhood, and Kenny's feckless, drunken adulthood. Convicted in 1983 of the brutal killing of neighbour Katharina Brow, Kenny attempts suicide in jail. Betty decides to qualify as a lawyer, so that she can take on his case. As she struggles for years to combine studying and family life, her marriage breaks down and her sons choose to live with their father, pitching her into depression. Eventually, with the help of classmate Abra, she begins looking for the original DNA evidence to prove Kenny innocent. She passes the bar exam. Lawyer Barry Scheck of the Innocence Project agrees to help with her quest. When a long police search fails to find the original evidence, Betty visits the storerooms and courtrooms herself and uncovers it. When DNA tests rule Kenny out as the murderer, the local DA suggests that he may be retried as an accomplice. Betty and Scheck interview the girlfriends who testified against him, and discover that they were blackmailed by policewoman Nancy Taylor into giving false testimony.

Kenny is cleared and released, and is reunited with his grown daughter Mandy.

Freakonomics

Directors: Alex Gibney, Rachel Grady, Heidi Ewing, Seth Gordon, Eugene Jarecki, Morgan Spurlock
Certificate: 12A 93m 19s

A brisk but awkwardly assembled adaptation of the bestselling book by 'rogue economist' Steven D. Levitt and journalist Stephen J. Dubner, *Freakonomics* comprises a quartet of stylistically and tonally diverse short documentaries. Each bears a distinct authorial stamp but all orbit Levitt's core arguments, chief of which (and the vaguest sounding) is that there is a "hidden side to everything".

Levitt, whose research has led to organisations from the New York Yankees to the CIA seeking his counsel, views incentives as fundamental to the machinations of modern society, urges the questioning of prevailing statistics, and hypothesises a kind of sociological butterfly effect whereby seismic events have ostensibly disparate origins. Levitt and Dubner appear together in a number of hyperactive transitional segments created by *The King of Kong* director Seth Gordon, the authors humorously bullet-pointing key concepts (parenting, crime, education). These graphics-heavy snippets are actually the most disposable in the film; case studies given breathing space in the book are too hurried here to genuinely engage.

Morgan Spurlock brings his zippy, slightly facetious style to 'A Roshanda by Any Other Name', which asks why parents from contrasting social and ethnic backgrounds give their offspring specific names, and how this may affect their future prospects. Spurlock refers to true cases such as the father who named his sons Winner and Loser (Loser grew up to forge a successful career in law enforcement, Winner became a career criminal) and the mother who mistakenly named her daughter Temptress because of her fondness for *Cosby Show* actress Tempestt Bledsoe (Temptress matured into a promiscuous teen). While the research is intriguing, Spurlock's conclusions are too foggy to leave much of an impression.

By contrast, Alex Gibney's 'Pure Corruption', an analysis of match-fixing in sumo wrestling, is markedly slowed and sombre. Gibney, whose *Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room* (2005) explored institutional venality to searing effect, relates how a scandal in this supposedly most honourable of sports was uncovered through measuring suspiciously fluctuating match scores – essentially, wrestlers would occasionally throw fights to maintain a status quo. Focusing on sumo's facade of Shintoist purity, Gibney draws parallels with disgraced financier Bernie Madoff: when something has a surface of absolute legitimacy, people won't think to question it.

The most impressive segment, Eugene Jarecki's 'It's Not Always a Wonderful Life', centres on Levitt's most controversial theory – that America's legalisation of abortion

CAST
Hilary Swank
Betty Anne Waters
Sam Rockwell
Kenny Waters
Minnie Driver
Abra Rice
Melissa Leo
Nancy Taylor
Peter Gallagher
Barry Scheck
Ari Graynor
Mandy Marsh
Loren Dean
Rick
Conor Donovan
Richard
Owen Campbell
Ben
Tobias Campbell
young Kenny
Bailee Madison
young Betty Anne
Clea Duvall
Brenda Marsh
Karen Young
Elizabeth Waters
Talia Balsam
prosecuting attorney
John Pyper-Ferguson
Aidan
Juliette Lewis
Roseanna Perry
Thomas Mahard
law professor
Laurie Brown
law professor 2
Ele Bardha
Don
Rusty Mewha
desk sergeant
Marc MacAulay
Officer Boisseau
Frank Ziegler
boyfriend
J. David Moeller
grandpa
Scott Philyaw
cop
Tobiasz Daszkiewicz
guy in bar
Iris Ingram
guy's girlfriend
John Lepard
minister
Jake Andolina
state trooper
Wallace Bridges
Global Van Lines witness
Marty Bufalini
defense attorney
Doug Hamilton
medical examiner
Sarab Kamo
blood expert
Hugh McGuire
trial judge

Dolby Digital/DTS Colour by
ARRI
[1.85:1]

Distributor
20th Century Fox International (UK)

9,628 ft +8 frames

SYNOPSIS Four short films examine the ideas of maverick economist Steven D. Levitt, who argues that incentives are fundamental to the workings of modern society and that human behaviour can be better understood through the critiquing of official statistics and data.

Morgan Spurlock's 'A Roshanda by Any Other Name' looks at parents' motivations for naming their children, and the potential impact of being given a name associated with a specific ethnic group. Alex Gibney's 'Pure Corruption' explores match-fixing in sumo wrestling. Eugene Jarecki's 'It's Not Always a Wonderful Life' examines Levitt's hypothesis that the legalisation of abortion in 1973 contributed to falling US crime rates in the 1990s. Heidi Ewing and Rachel Grady's 'Can You Bribe a Ninth Grader to Succeed?' details a Chicago high school's incentive scheme offering students money in return for improved grades.

in 1973 contributed to a huge slump in crime 20 years later. Jarecki uses inventive animation and manipulated film footage to put his message across, and provocatively compares the drop in US crime with its surge in post-Ceausescu Romania due to the relative abundance of unwanted children.

Finally, Heidi Ewing and Rachel Grady's 'Can You Bribe a Ninth Grader to Succeed?' chronicles a Chicago school's blunt incentive scheme – to reward struggling students with cash in exchange for improved grades. The results are unexpected (one student opines that the scheme is making teachers more apathetic) and Ewing and Grady's frank, unvarnished shooting is absorbing, but again forceful conclusions are lacking.

Freakonomics is always accessible, and its encouragement to think outside the box has to be applauded. But its ragtag structure makes it tricky to digest. Levitt's work, wide-ranging and freewheeling though it is, perhaps needs a more consistent vision.

• **Matthew Taylor**

Credits for this film were unavailable at the time of going to press and will be published in the March issue.



Things don't add up: 'Freakonomics'

Gasland

USA 2010

Director: Josh Fox

A man stands by a sink, patiently holding a cigarette lighter to the mouth of a running tap. Nothing, more nothing, then boom – a fireball fills the air. The man reels back. "I smell hair," he laughs in disbelief, looking at his singed arm.

It's mundane yet surreal moments like this – tap water not just flammable but explosive – that make *Gasland*, a debut feature by its writer and director Josh Fox, arresting and at times terrifying. On the surface, a documentary about hydraulic fracture mining ('fracking') – the technology that pumps enormous quantities of water and toxic chemicals deep underground to extract natural gas from massive subterranean shale beds – hardly screams watchability. But, with a remorselessness all the more powerful for its quiet unfussiness, Fox builds up a riveting portrait of near-apocalyptic environmental damage and a corporate mindset willing to ruin water sources irrevocably for the sake of a few years' profit.

Another example might be the ultraviolet image Fox is shown of a condensate tank, used to store by-products of the drilling. To the naked eye nothing is visible, but the UV shows clouds of toxic hydrocarbons billowing from the tank – examples of which Fox has previously been climbing over, oblivious to the danger. *Gasland* itself could be compared to this UV image: an attempt to make visible something invisible. Fox begins with the letter he receives offering him \$100,000 for the rights to drill on his bucolic property in rural Pennsylvania. He visits Dimock, a small Pennsylvania town surrounded by fracking activity, and hears stories of wells exploding, black water, headaches, pains, long-term sickness. Fox goes on to tour 25 states, cataloguing similar stories and explaining the legislation pushed through by former vice president Dick Cheney, exempting energy companies from key environmental acts – exemptions that make fracking invisible to any regulation or monitoring.

Documentary investigations of corporate America's abuses are still made in the shadow of Michael Moore and the doorstepping stunts that broke ground in reaching bigger audiences. *Gasland* humanises its unglamorous subject-matter by putting Fox and his road trip at the film's heart. But the closest *Gasland* gets to Moore's broadbrush symbolism comes when Fox dons a gasmask and plays a banjo to emulate 1960s protest singer Pete Seeger, while in the background fracking drills and condensate tanks fume hellishly. It's a powerful, if theatrical, image – all the more so in a film otherwise defined by a cool meticulousness. Editor Matthew Sanchez is credited with the film's 'structure', and his pacing is key to *Gasland*. While Fox narrates throughout in a deadpan murmur, the flow of

images is at times allowed to build to a flood. Lists of deadly carcinogens, scans of leaked documents, the logos of ruthless but unregulated energy companies: all these pour from the screen like an uncapped well. The effect is to leave the viewer with the disturbing sense of the sheer quantity of evidence amassed by Fox, and what *Gasland* has had to omit.

• **Sam Davies**

CREDITS

Directed by

Josh Fox

Produced by

Trish Adlesic

Josh Fox

Molly Gandour

Written by

Josh Fox

Camera

Josh Fox

Editing and Structure

Matthew Sanchez

©International WOW

Company

Production

Companies

International WOW

Company production

This film was supported

by a grant from The

Sundance

Documentary Film

Program Reach Fund,

The Fledgling Fund

Executive Producer

Debra Winger

Co-producers

Don Guarneri

Laura Newman

David Roma

Post-production

Co-ordinator

Joanna Lara

Additional Camera

Matthew Sanchez

Molly Gandour

Noah Hutton

Alex Tyson

Raye Levine

Laura Newman

Graphics/Animation

Juan Cardarelli

Eric M. Levy

Alex Tyson

Additional Editors

Alex Tyson

Kirsten Greene

Post-production

Steven Iollen

Music Supervision

Susan Jacobs

Jackie Mulhearn

Re-recording Mixer

Brian Scibinico

Supervising Sound

Editor

Brian Scibinico

Consultants

Barbara Arindell

Henry Chalfant

Morgan Jenness

Joe Levine

Weston Wilson

not speaking on behalf of the EPA (although he works for the EPA)

Dr Theo Colborn

environmental health analyst, *Time* magazine Hero of the Environment, Lifetime Achievement Award: National Council for Science and the Environment, President of the Endocrine Disruption Exchange, former US EPA adviser

Lisa Bracken

on-screen participant

Robert Blackcloud

Lisa's father

Dr Al Armendariz

air quality specialist and researcher, Southern Methodist University

Calvin Tillman

Mayor of Dush

Wilma Subra

chemist, 1st responder and MacArthur 'Genius Award' recipient

John Hanger

Secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

James Gennaro

New York City Council Environmental Board chair

Scott Stringer

Manhattan Borough President

Maurice Hinche

congressman, New York

In Colour

[1.78:1]

Distributor

Dogwoof Pictures

WITH

Mike Markhan

Marsha Mendenhall

Jesse Ellsworth

Amee Ellsworth

on-screen participants

Genius Within The Inner Life of Glenn Gould

Canada/Sweden/
The Netherlands/United
Kingdom/Germany/USA 2009

Directors: Michèle Hozer,
Peter Raymont

It's a terrible title, but it does at least suggest what this documentary portrait of legendary pianist Glenn Gould is attempting: to get beyond the myth to the complexities and contradictions of the human being, and, a few major caveats notwithstanding, it does a job. It enters into a crowded field though; there have already been several documentaries about Gould, and most memorably François Girard's oblique, fictionalised refractions of the Gould persona and music in *Thirty Two Short Films about Glenn Gould* (1993). Gould was notoriously private, so *Genius Within*'s raison d'être is its laying claim to new and illuminating material about his emotional life, most notably in the shape of interviews with a former lover, Cornelia Foss (who only went public on their affair in 2007) and her two now middle-aged children, with whom by all accounts Gould spent several happy, fulfilled years before a painful separation.

Gould's is an astonishing story, and those fresh to his life and work will relish some of the details and anecdotes here – the fact he could read music before he could read, the overnight fame, the technique that suggested someone playing a duet with themselves, the strange tics and personal eccentricities. But captivating as his looks and image were – and Gould seemed to play up to that image, despite his reserve and solitariness – the music was what really swept people away, in vast numbers, with its combination of precision and passion. The Russian pianist Vladimir Ashkenazy saw Gould play live on a tour of Russia in 1957 and speaks of being riveted by the clarity and lack of affectation in his playing.

The account of this Russian tour is the best segment of *Genius Within*, so rich that it could in fact have been the centrepiece of, or way into, a more imaginative, Cold War-inflected film about Gould. As it stands it still conveys, more powerfully than elsewhere, not only an inkling of the communion Gould achieved with audiences, but also the sense of something sacred and transcendental in the music which he was able to reach and transmit – obviously anathema to the Soviet authorities at the time. Gould's interpretations were metaphorical reworkings based on deep intellectual study, a taking apart and putting back together into new configurations; unorthodox, even unacceptable in some people's view, so much so that, in one famous incident before a later concert in the States, conductor Leonard Bernstein took pains to distance himself from Gould's interpretation of a Brahms piece – probably the only time this has

SYNOPSIS A documentary investigating the safety of hydraulic fracture mining, a process that has developed rapidly over the past decade following the discovery of huge natural gas deposits in shale beds underneath large areas of the United States. Director and narrator Josh Fox tours locations where 'fracking' has been carried out, documenting its detrimental effects on the environment, water quality and human health.

Things don't add up: 'Freakonomics'



CREDITS

Directed by
Michèle Hozer
Peter Raymont
Producer
Peter Raymont
Director of Photography
Walter Corbett
Editor
Michèle Hozer

©GG Productions Inc.

Production Companies

White Pine Pictures presents
Produced with the co-operation of the estate of Glenn Gould
Produced with the participation of Technicolor, Canada – The Canadian Film or Video Production Tax Credit, Ontario – Ontario Media Development Corporation, Canadian Television Fund, Rogers Cable Network Fund, Téléfilm Canada
Produced in association with Films Transit International, Knowledge, TVO – TV Ontario, STV (Commissioning Editor Hjalmar Palmgren), NPS (Commissioning Editor Anneriek van der Zanden), Bio. – The Biography Channel, ZDF Arte (Commissioning Editor Hans-Robert Eisenhauer), American Masters (Executive Producer Susan Lacy, Series Producer Prudence Glass, Supervising Producer Julie Sacks), Bravo! Produced by White Pine Pictures

Production Supervisor

Helene C. Valinsky

Commissioning Editors

STV: Hjalmar Palmgren

NPS: Anneriek van der Zanden

ZDF Arte: Hans-Robert Eisenhauer

Production Co-ordinators

Dylan Cook, Rita Su

Production Accountant

Candida Buder

Post-production Co-ordinator

Daniel Montgomery

Archival Materials Researcher/Clearance

Monica Penner

Creative Consultants

Diana Holtzberg

Susan Lacy

Additional Photography

Nicholas Blair

David Malsheff

Edward Marritz
Andrew Speller
Bill Turnley
Motion Graphics
Justin Tripp
Hair/Make-up
Indiana Allerman
Darrell Freeman
Jennifer Martin
Title Design
Justin Tripp
Music Performed by
Glenn Gould
Soundtrack
"Downtown", "Who Am I" – Petula Clark; "Creole Girl" – The Duke of Iron; "Lieder der Ophelia" by Richard Strauss; "Piano Sonata No. 7, Opus 83" – Sergei Prokofiev
Sound Supervisor
Russell Walker
Sound
Bruce Cameron
Re-recording Mixer
Ian Rodness
Research Consultant
Kevin Bazzana
Original Research/Consultant
Michael Clarkson
Film Extracts
Virtues of Hesitation (1956)

WITH

Jaime Laredo
violinist/conductor
Kevin Bazzana
biographer

Vladimir Ashkenazy
pianist/conductor
Fred Sherry
cellist

John P.L. Roberts
longtime friend

Ruth Watson
Henderson

pianist/composer

Victor Feldbrill
conductor

Fran Barrault
Glenn Gould's girlfriend

James Wright
Gould scholar

Cornelia Foss
interviewee

Don Hunstein
photographer, Columbia Records

Mark Kingwell
philosopher/writer

Lorne Tulk
audio engineer

Christopher Foss

Eliza Foss

Petula Clark

interviewee

Ray Roberts

Gould's personal assistant

Roxolana Roslak

soprano

In Colour/Black and White

[1.78:1]

Distributor

Verve Pictures

Get Low

USA/Germany/Poland 2009

Director: Aaron Schneider

With Robert Duvall, Sissy Spacek, Bill Murray, Lucas Black

Certificate PG 103m 18s

After all these years, is it possible that Bill Murray has become a better actor than Robert Duvall? In *Get Low*, Duvall gets the Oscar-bait part of Felix Bush, a hermit with a Dark Past seeking to make his peace with death in 1930s Tennessee. With his hobo beard and Southern orneriness, Bush is just too loveably quirky (he offers visitors rabbit from a skillet) and fundamentally decent to have any *truly* dark secrets. Lest any troublesome ambiguities hamper viewers' enjoyment, director Aaron Schneider's debut feature establishes Felix's inherent goodness in the first ten minutes by showing him stroking a woman's faded photograph, then dissolving to a candle flame. Is it possible that the mysterious fire shown at the start of the film wasn't Felix's fault, and that this dear old man isn't actually a homicidal arsonist? Quite possibly.

Not trusting its audience one inch of the way, *Get Low* first shows Duvall emerging as a threatening hulk from barn shadows, looking for all the world as if he were still *To Kill a Mockingbird*'s Boo Radley. A sign on his property reads "No damn trespassing!" (those Southerners!). "Beware of mule," it adds, and lo and behold, Duvall proves to be just as stubborn as said animal. (The mule has the habit of sitting on its hind legs like a dog, reminding viewers of *George of the Jungle*'s elephant Shep – presumably not the desired frame of reference.) He eventually heads to town to arrange what would now be called a 'living funeral', where the townsfolk can tell the wild tales they've heard of him over the years.

Get Low takes forever to get to its less-than-surprising final revelations; it's the kind of Sundance sap that begs to be deemed 'adult' even as it underlines every last emotion. Help arrives in the form of Bill Murray's funeral director Frank Quinn. With the same moustache he used as *Rushmore*'s Herman Blume, Murray turns in an understatedly sad sketch of a veteran

salesman forced to hustle the less intelligent in order to live. Good at his job but not pleased about it, he prays for others' death even as he knows better. Murray puts his usual deadpan spin on every line, but he also portrays unhappiness without the tinkling melancholy pianos or stoically repressed tears Duvall requires.

There are some other minor pleasures to be had, notably Lucas Black's commendably straightforward role as Buddy, funeral parlour employee and reluctant accomplice to Quinn's scheming. But the atmosphere is oversold both in time period and location (you can't go more than five minutes without some obtrusive fiddles and mandolins popping up) and the central mystery remarkably saccharine. "We like to imagine good and bad, right and wrong are far apart," Bush's friend the Reverend Charlie Jackson (Bill Cobbs) portentously intones. "But the truth is, they're all tangled up together." Anyone who thinks that's a revelation will find *Get Low* compelling, but the film can't even commit to that, having Felix finally confess to... an accident. So much for taking responsibility.

• **Vadim Rizov**

CREDITS

Directed by
Aaron Schneider

Produced by

Dean Zanuck

David Gundlach

Screenplay

Chris Provenzano

C. Gaby Mitchell

Story

Chris Provenzano

Scott Seeke

Cinematographer

David Boyd

Editor

Aaron Schneider

Production Designer

Geoffrey Kirkland

Music by/Music Score

Produced by

Jan A.P. Kaczmarek

Co-producer

Richard Luke Rothschild

Associate Producers

Lily Phillips

Justyna Pawlak

Unit Production Manager

Richard Luke Rothschild

Production Supervisor

Suzanne Lore

Production Co-ordinator

Katie Willard Troebs

Production Auditor

Don West

Production services provided by FRB Productions, Inc.

Executive Producers

David B. Ginsberg

Harrison Zanuck

C. Gaby Mitchell

Joey Rappa

Robert Duvall

Rob Carliner

Oliver Simon

Daniel Baur

Alain Midic

Blerim Destani

Dariusz Gasiorkowski

Brad Park

Brandie Park

Konrad Wojterkowski

Scott Fischer

Don Mandrik

Chris Provenzano

Beth Crookham

Co-producer

Richard Luke Rothschild

Associate Producers

Lily Phillips

Justyna Pawlak

Unit Production Manager

Richard Luke Rothschild

Production Supervisor

Suzanne Lore

Production Co-ordinator

Katie Willard Troebs

Production Auditor

Don West

SYNOPSIS Tennessee, the 1930s. After some 40 years of living like a hermit in the backwoods, Felix Bush rides into town to arrange a funeral for himself. The church won't take his money without any religious component, but funeral parlour boss Frank Quinn and employee Buddy see the potential for profit. They agree to help Felix throw a funeral party for himself while he's still alive; the townspeople are invited to come and tell stories they've heard about Felix.

Promoting the event, Felix announces on the radio that, for five dollars per raffle ticket, everyone who attends and tells a story will have a chance to win his 300 acres of land. Mattie Darrow – the sister of the woman Frank once loved – has returned to town, and the two become friends again. As the money pours in, Felix and Buddy take a trip to visit the Reverend Charlie Jackson, the only person who knows why Felix went into self-imposed exile. Jackson refuses to tell Felix's story for him, and Felix decides to cancel the event. Frank, panicking about his finances, begs the reverend to come and tell Felix's story if he can't finish it himself. Felix's health deteriorates.

At the party, Felix explains that he was courting Mattie when he met her married sister and instantly fell in love. They were planning to run away when her husband became suspicious; in a fight between the two men, the house was accidentally set alight, burning husband and wife as Felix ran away. Absolved, Felix dies peacefully.

SYNOPSIS A documentary about the life of pianist Glenn Gould, who became an overnight star in 1955 at the age of 22 on release of his debut recording, a groundbreaking, technically virtuoso interpretation of Bach's Goldberg Variations. A myth soon developed around Gould, thanks in part to his eccentric behaviour and good looks, as well as his hatred of performing, the latter causing him to regularly cancel concerts until he finally gave up playing live altogether in 1964, at the age of 31. He devoted himself thereafter to studio recordings and radio shows, many of which were profoundly innovative. He made another, very different recording of the Goldberg Variations not long before he died of a stroke in 1982. The story of his life and musical talent is told chronologically through archive and home-movie footage, and interviews with intimates, colleagues and admirers.

• **Kieron Corless**

Location Manager
Carrie L.A.
Post-production Supervisor
Cory McCrum Abdo
Assistant Directors
1st: Eric Tignini
2nd: Hope Garrison
Script Supervisor
Megan H. Graham
Casting
Craig Fincannon
Lisa Mae Fincannon
Camera Operators
A: David Boyd
B: John Priebe
Chief Lighting Technician
Brian Gunter
Key Grip
Billy Sherrill
On-set Visual Effects Supervisor
Alex Frederici
Visual Effects
Furious FX
Additional: CIS Hollywood
Consultants: BCS Films
Denise Ballantyne
Torn Ballantyne
Special Effects
Co-ordinator: David Fletcher
Supervisor: Ken Gorrell
Art Director
Korey Michael Washington
Set Decorator
Frank Galline
Property Master
Elliott Boswell
Construction Co-ordinator
Curtis Crowe
Costume Designer
Julie Weiss
Costume Supervisor
Dan Moore
Make-up Department Head
Ken Diaz
Make-up Artist
Carol Rasheed
Hairdressing Department Head
Colleen Callaghan
Hair Stylist
Cynthia Chapman
Title Design
Framework Studio LA
Additional Music
Jerry Douglas
Score Performed by
Polish Radio Orchestra
Conducted by: Wojciech Rodek
Orchestrations
Jan A.P. Kaczmarek
Dylan Maulucci
Music Supervisor
Eyjen Klean
Soundtrack
"I'm Looking over a Four Leaf Clover" - Bix Beiderbecke; "Farewell Blues" - Paul Whiteman and His Orchestra; "My Blue Heaven" - Gene Austin; "If I Didn't Care" - The Ink Spots; "Monkey Bay" - Jerry Douglas, Russ Barenberg, Edgar Meyer; "Whiskey before Breakfast" - East Virginia Blues - Steel Drivers; "Lay My Burden Down" - Alison Krauss
Production Sound Mixer
Shirley Libby
Re-recording Mixers
Jeffrey Perkins
Tim Le Blanc
Supervising Sound Editors
Avram Gold
Stephen Flick
Stunt Co-ordinator
Lonnie R. Smith Jr
Mule Trainers
Steve Foster
Doug Sloan

CAST

Robert Duvall
Felix Bush
Sissy Spacek
Mattie Darrow
Bill Murray
Frank Quinn
Lucas Black
Buddy Robinson
Gerald McRaney
Rev. Gus Horton
Bill Cobbs
Rev. Charlie Jackson
Scott Cooper
Carl
Lori Beth Edgeman
Kathryn
Blerim Destani
Gary
Tomasz Karolak
Orville
Linds Edwards
WKNG announcer
Andrea Powell
Bonnie
Chandler Riggs
Torn
Danny Vinson
Grier
Andrew Stahl
photographer
Marc Gowan
Mr Feldman
Arin Logan
Mary Lee Stroup
Gracie
Bush's mule
Dolby Digital
In Colour
[2.35:1]
Distributor
Sony Pictures Releasing
9,297 ft +0 frames

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 1

USA/United Kingdom 2010

Director: David Yates

With Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint, Emma Watson, Robbie Coltrane

Certificate 12A 145m 53s

The seventh and final book in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series offers a classic finale in which all the threads, and in particular all the threats that surround the hero, are unleashed to create a seemingly insurmountable crisis. Unable to return to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, Harry loses contact with the Order of the Phoenix, the group of witches and wizards who have been protecting him, and is pursued ever more balefully by the evil Lord Voldemort. Now in control of the wizarding world, Voldemort is also pursuing a lost object: a wand made by Death as a gift for a wizard who thought he had outwitted him.

The wand is the first of the titular Deathly Hallows, revealed in the film in an animated folktale of gorgeous shadow-play, whose dark shapes link the figure of Death to the swirling CGI forms of Voldemort's loyal Death Eaters and the Dementors who tormented Harry in the third film. Rowling's books are much possessed by death, and none more so than the seventh, which opens with the aftermath of Albus Dumbledore's death and closes with Voldemort's desecration of his tomb. A series regular – Mad-Eye Moody – dies in the first 15 minutes, as does Harry's owl Hedwig; the Minister for Magic is dispatched shortly thereafter. Harry visits his parents' grave, with its movingly simple stone, and ends the film by burying Dobby the elf shortly after his transformation from zero to hero.

Despite these dramatic incidents tethering a clear theme, and a narrative structure driven by a dual quest, the film never quite thrills. Director David Yates faces the daunting challenge of dramatising huge swathes of exposition, as Rowling uses the first half of *Deathly Hallows* to lay all the pieces – Hallows, Horcruxes, Dumbledore's bequests, not to mention shifting allegiances (and wands) – in place for the final confrontation. Rather than taking time to wonder, to immerse, or even to grieve at the crucial moments of the story, the film and its characters are driven on towards this future confrontation with videogame logic and an endless flow of exposition-based dialogue.

After delivering what is simultaneously an immense deductive leap and a bald piece of exposition, Hermione responds to Harry's compliment on her brilliance by pointing out that she is simply being extremely logical (a post-feminist trait also seen in Dana Scully and *Star Trek's* Seven of Nine). Her logic underlines Rowling's practical magic, which



Hurry up Harry: Daniel Radcliffe

springs from a combination of the pragmatic reasoning in folktales and the mathematical, deductive approach of alchemy: there is none of the deeper illogic of the truly fantastic operating here, except for the power of love.

Yates hints at the coming contest between love and death (as good and bad magic) in small moments such as Hermione's instinctual 'disappearance' (teleportation) to the Forest of Dean, which she once visited with her parents. Liberated from Hogwarts, the film also travels to the awesome limestone pavement of Malham Cove in the Yorkshire Dales. There is magic in such locations, which make the characters seem small, and imply the absolute threat Voldemort represents, revealed just after Harry lays aside his wand to bury Dobby.

The Golden Snitch left by Dumbledore to Harry bears the words "opens at the close". The same is true of the film's story – not only for the

lightning-bolt revelation of Voldemort's power that comes at the end, but also Harry's realisation that he (and the filmmakers) will need more than a wand (or special effects) to escape the deadly, and deadening, trap of the final confrontation.  Sophie Mayer

CREDITS

Directed by David Yates
Produced by David Heyman
David Barron
J.K. Rowling
Screenplay Steve Kloves
Based on the novel by J.K. Rowling
Director of Photography Eduardo Serra
Edited by Mark Day
Production Designer Stuart Craig
Music Composed and Conducted by Alexandre Desplat

©Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.
Production Companies
A Warner Bros. Pictures presentation
A Heyday Films production
A David Yates film
Executive Producer
Lionel Wigram
Co-producers
John Trehy
Tim Lewis
Unit Production Manager
Tim Lewis
Production Managers
Simon Emanuel
2nd Unit: Russell Lodge
Production Co-ordinators
Anji Holt

SYNOPSIS England, the present. Harry Potter's nemesis Lord Voldemort has taken over the Ministry of Magic. Following attacks by Voldemort's Death Eaters, Harry and his friends Hermione Granger and Ron Weasley go on the run. They take with them items bequeathed to them by their former headmaster Albus Dumbledore, which they hope will help them in their quest to find the Horcruxes that contain Voldemort's soul. (Only by destroying the Horcruxes can they hope to destroy Voldemort.)

The trio snatch a Horcrux – a locket – from the Ministry of Magic and disappear into the wild. They try to destroy the locket but are unable to do so. Affected by the malevolent power of the locket, Ron leaves in a fit of jealousy. Harry and Hermione go to Godric's Hollow, where Dumbledore once lived, and face Voldemort's snake-familiar in a fight in which Harry's wand is broken.

Harry is visited by a Patronus spirit, which guides him to the Sword of Gryffindor, lying at the bottom of a frozen pond. Harry fails to retrieve the sword, but Ron returns and retrieves it, using it to destroy the locket.

The three friends visit eccentric wizard Xenophilius Lovegood, who reveals a clue to Voldemort's plans in the folktale 'The Three Brothers', about powerful gifts given by Death. However, Xenophilius gives Harry away to the Death Eaters, sacrificing him in the hope of saving his daughter Luna, who is being held captive by Voldemort's followers. The trio are taken to the home of Death Eater Lucius Malfoy. Lucius's son Draco is unable – or unwilling – to identify Harry, as Hermione has disguised him magically, so Bellatrix Lestrange, another Death Eater, tortures Hermione. Dobby the elf, Harry's loyal friend, rescues Harry, Hermione, Ron and Luna, but is killed by Bellatrix as they make their escape.

Voldemort learns from Dumbledore's old friend Gellert Grindelwald that Death's first gift – the most powerful wand in existence – lies buried with Dumbledore in his tomb. Voldemort blasts open the tomb and claims the wand as his own.

Anna Hall
Winnie Wishart
2nd Unit:
Kate Garrett
Tony Davis
Production Accountant
Gary Nixon
Supervising Location Manager
Sue Quinn
Location Managers
Mark Somner
Joseph Jayawardena
Michael Harm
Lee Robertson
Steve Harvey
Post-production Supervisor
Katie Reynolds
2nd Unit Director
Stephen Wooldenden
Assistant Directors
1st: Jamie Christopher
Key 2nd: Matthew Sharp
2nd: Stewart Hamilton
2nd: Jane Ryan
2nd: Ali Morris
2nd Unit
1st: Dominic Fysh
2nd: Emma Stokes
Script Supervisors
Anna Worley
2nd Unit:
Sharon Mansfield
B Unit Script Supervisors
2nd Unit:
Nicoletta Mani
Suzanne McGeachan
Casting
Fiona Weir
Underwater Director of Photography
Tim Wooster
Camera Operators
A: Mike Proudfoot
B: David Morgan
B: David Worley
2nd Unit
Stefan Stankowski
Gary Spratling
Underwater Unit
Sean Connor
Steadicam Operators
Alf Tramontini
2nd Unit:
Paul Edwards
Gaffers
Robert 'Chuck' Finch
2nd Unit:
Wick Finch
Underwater Unit:
Wayne King
Mark Campany
Key Grips
Kenny Atherton
2nd Unit:
Darren Holland
Visual Effects
Supervisors:
Tim Burke
Producer:
Emma Norton
Supervisors:
Chris Shaw
John Moffatt
Visual Effects by
MPC
Double Negative
Cinesite
FrameStore
Baseblack
Rising Sun Pictures
Additional:
Rise FX
Gradient Effects
3D Scanning
Lidar VFX
Facial Capture
Mova
Special Effects
Supervisor:
John Richardson
2nd Unit Floor
Supervisor:
Stephen Hutchinson
Animatronic Model Designers
Steve Wright
Joe Scott
Hugh James Sandys
Val Jones-Mendoza
Esteban Mendoza
Abbie Jones
Dan Curtis
Supervising Senior Modeler
John Weller
Senior Modelers
Adrian Getley
Tracey Curtis
Christopher Eldridge
Paul Knight

'The Deathly Hallows'**Animation Supervised by**

Ben Hibon

Motion Control

The Visual Effects

Company Ltd

Additional Editing

Philip Kloss

Supervising Art Director

Neil Lamont

Senior Art Director

Andrew Ackland-Snow

Art Directors

Al Bullock

Mark Bartholomew

Gary Tomkins

Hattie Storey

Nicholas Henderson

Martin Foley

Molly Hughes

Christian Huband

Kate Grimble

Peter Dorne

Ashley Winter

Set Decorators

Stephie McMillan

Rosie Goodwin

Conceptual Artists

Adam Brockbank

Andrew Williamson

Peter McKinstry

Paul Catling

Property Master

Barry Wilkinson

Construction**Co-ordinator**

Amanda Pettett

Construction Manager

Paul Hayes

Costume Designer

Jany Temime

Costume Supervisor

Charlotte Finlay

Costume Master

2nd Unit:

Laurent Guinci

Wardrobe Supervisor

Andrew Hunt

2nd Unit Wardrobe

Stephanie Paul

Make-up Designer

Amanda Knight

Make-up Artistes

Sharon Nicholas

Amy Byrne

Amanda Burns

Belinda Hodgson

Sarah Downes

Jessica Needham

Ken Lintott

Elizabeth Lewis

2nd Unit:

Jennifer Hegarty

Special Make-up Effects

Nick Dudman

Hair Designer

Lisa Tomblin

Hairdressers

Elisabetta De Leonardi

Francesca Crowder

Ann Townsend

Nadine Mann

Stephen Rose

Tracey Smith

Jenny Harling

Hilary Haines

Francesco Alberico

Anita Casali

Luca Vannella

2nd Unit:

Catherine Heys

Titles

Foreign Office

End Credits

Fugitive Studios

Music Performed by

London Symphony

Orchestra

Choirs

London Voices

The London Oratory

Junior Choir

The Schola Cantorum of

The Cardinal Vaughan

Memorial School

Score Orchestrated by

Conrad Pope

Nan Schwartz

Clifford J. Tasner

Jean-Pascal Beintus

Music Supervisor

Matt Biffa

Soundtrack

'O Children' – Nick Cave

& The Bad Seeds: 'My

Love Is Always Here' by

Alexandre Desplat,

Gerard McCann –

London Voices:

'Hedwig's Theme' by

John Williams

Sound Designers

Michael Fentum

Dominic Gibbs

Production Sound Mixer

Stuart Wilson

2nd Unit Sound Mixer

John Casali

Re-recording Mixers

Stuart Hilliker

Mike Dowson

Supervising Sound Editor

James Mather

Stunt Co-ordinator

Greg Powell

Parsektongue by

Dr Francis Nolan

Chief Animal Trainer

Gary Gero

CAST

Daniel Radcliffe

Harry Potter

Rupert Grint

Ron Weasley

Emma Watson

Hermione Granger

Helena Bonham Carter

Bellatrix Lestrange

Robbie Coltrane

Rubeus Hagrid

Warwick Davis

Griphook

Ralph Fiennes

Lord Voldemort

Michael Gambon

Professor Albus

Dumbledore

Brendan Gleeson

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy

Alastor 'Mad-Eye' Moody

Richard Griffiths

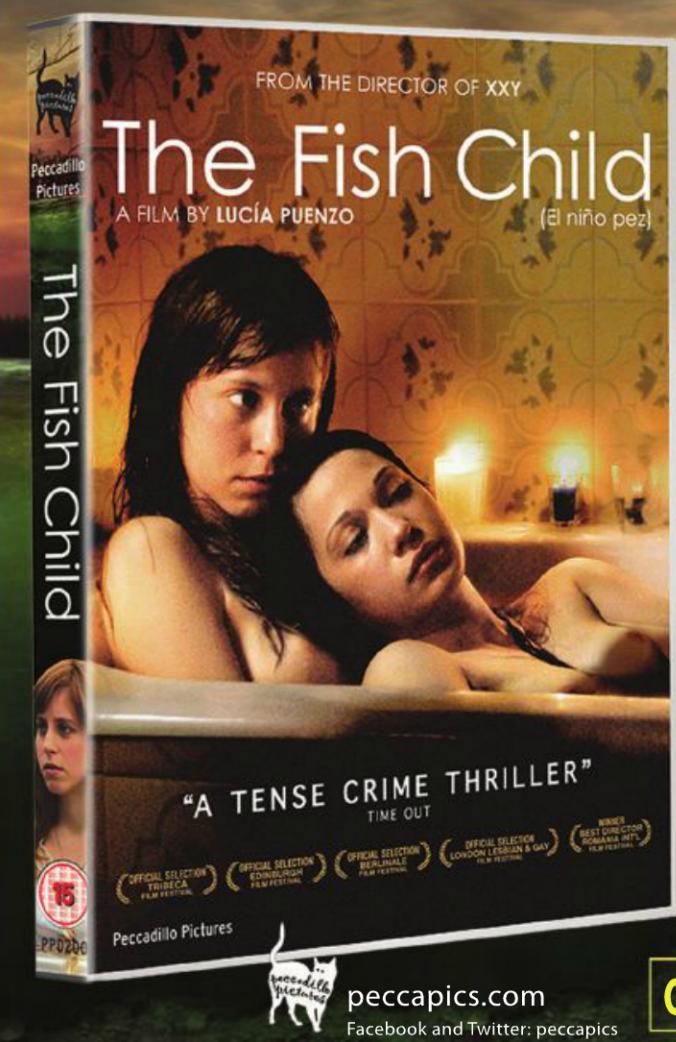
Vernon Dursley

John Hurt

Ollivander

Jason Isaacs

Lucius Malfoy



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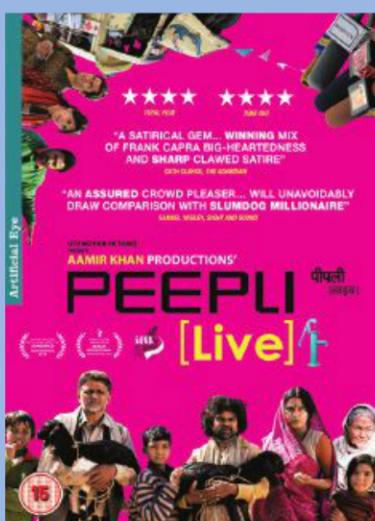
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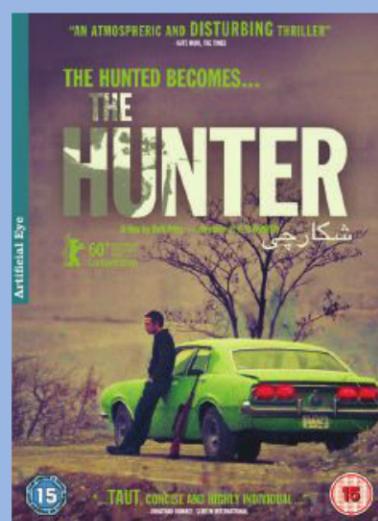
New DVDs for 2011



Anusha Rizvi
Peepli Live

A poverty-stricken farmer hatches an extreme plan to pay off his debts in this riotously entertaining satire of modern-day India, produced by Bollywood megastar Aamir Khan.

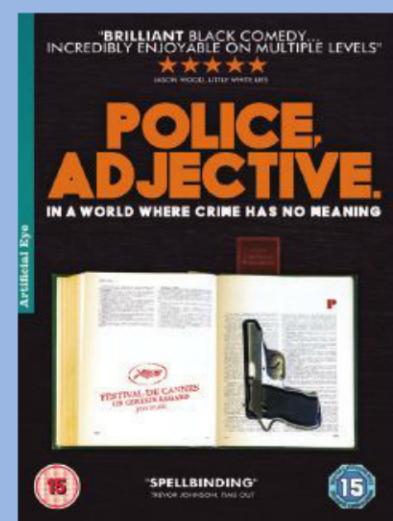
● Available on DVD 24 January 2011



Rafi Pitts
The Hunter

A powerful and searing indictment of political corruption, 'The Hunter' is a tense and compelling film set against the background of social unrest in Iran.

● Available on DVD 28 February 2011



Corneliu Porumboiu
Police, Adjective

The acclaimed new film from the director of the award-winning '12:08 East of Bucharest' is a blackly humorous and intelligent satire of police bureaucracy.

● Available on DVD 14 February 2011

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Agnès Berméjé Lainé
San Francisco Unit:
Karen E. Shaw
Erin Engman
Production Accountants
Jason S. Gondek
London Unit:
Michael Beaudin
French Unit:
Françoise Bouillon-Pommerville

Location Managers
London Unit:
Martin Joy
French Unit:
Antonin Depardieu
San Francisco Unit:
Patrick O. Mignano
Assistant Directors
1st: David M. Bernstein
2nd: Ryan Craig
London Unit
2nd: Samar Pollitt
French Unit:
2nd: Vanessa Djian
Script Supervisor
Mable Lawson McCrary

Casting
Fiona Weir
Paris:
Elodie Demey
Underwater Director of Photography/Operator
London Unit:
Mike Valentine
Camera/Steadicam Operator
Stephen S. Campanelli
Chief Lighting Technician
Ross Dunkerley
London Unit Gaffer
Eddie Knight
French Unit Gaffer
Stéphane Assie

Key Grips
London Unit:
Kevin Fraser
French Unit:
Michel Strasser
San Francisco Unit:
Charles Saldana
Visual Effects Supervisor
Michael Owens

Tsunami Sequence Design
Michael Owens
Visual Effects by
Scanline VFX Los Angeles

Special Effects Supervisors
London Unit:
Dominic Tuohy
San Francisco Unit:
Steven Riley
Supervising Art Directors
Patrick Sullivan

London Unit:
Tom Brown
Stunt Co-ordinators UK:

Frank Walsh
Art Directors
London Unit:
Dean Clegg
French Unit:
Anne Seibel
Set Decorators

Gary Fettis
London Unit:
Lisa Chugg
Property Masters
Mike Sexton
London Unit:
Barry Gibbs
Construction

London Unit Manager:
Harry Metcalfe
San Francisco Unit
Co-ordinator:
Michael A. Muscarella

Costumes Designed by
Deborah Hopper

Costume Supervisors
Elaine Ramires

London Unit:
Kenny Crouch

San Francisco Unit:
Nancy Foreman

Make-up Department Head

Paul Engelen

Hair Department Head
Colin Jamison

Titles

PJ Productions, Inc.

Guitarist

Bruce Forman

Orchestrated/Conducted by

Ashley Irwin

Arranger/Conductor

Gennady Lektonov

Soundtrack

"Piano Concerto #2" by

Sergei Rachmaninov;

"Una Furtiva Lagrima"

from "L'elisir d'amore"

by Gaetano Donizetti –

Peter Dvorsky: "La fleur

que tu m'avais jetée"

from "Carmen" by

Georges Bizet –

Marcello Giordani:

"Nessun Dorma" from

"Turandot" by Giacomo

Puccini, Giuseppe

Adami, Renato Simoni –

Tito Beltrán: "Che gelida

manina" from "La

bohème" by Giacomo

Puccini – Thomas

Harper

Sound Mixer

Walt Martin

Re-recording Mixers

John Reitz

Gregg Rudloff

Supervising Sound Editors

Alan Robert Murray

Bub Asman

Stunt Co-ordinators UK:

Rob Inch
Hawaii:
B.L. Richmond
Stunt Co-ordinator
MoCap:
Thom Williams

CAST

Matt Damon

George Longenbach

Cécile de France

Marie Lelay

George McLaren

Frankie McLaren

Marcus/Jason

Jay Mohr

Billy

Bryce Dallas Howard

Melanie

Marthe Keller

Dr Rousseau

Thierry Neuvic

Didier

Derek Jacobi

himself

Cyndi Mayo Davis

Island Hotel clerk

Lisa Griffiths

stall owner

Jessica Griffiths

island girl

Ferguson Reid

Derek Sakakura

rescuers

Richard Kind

Christos

Charlie Creed-Miles

photographer

Lyndsey Marshal

Jackie

Rebekah Staton

Declan Conlon

social workers

Marcus Boyea

Franz Drameh

Tex Jacks

Taylor Doherty

teenagers

Mylène Jampanoi

Jasmine, reporter

Stéphane Freiss

Guillaume Belcher

Laurent Bateau

TV producer

Calum Grant

factory worker

Steven R. Schirripa

'Carlo': cooking teacher

Joe Bellan

Tony

Janifer Lewis

Candace

Tom Beard

priest

Andy Gathergood

Helen Elizabeth

Jackie's friends

Jean-Yves Berteloot

Michael, publishing

executive

Niamh Cusack

foster mother

George Costigan
foster father
Claire Price
Marcus' teacher
Surinder Duhra
Islamic teacher
Sean Buckley
Dr Meredith
Audrey Brisson
hospice receptionist
Jess Murphy
dying woman
Michael Cuckson
hospice husband
Jennifer Thorne
hospice mother
Barry Martin
hospice father
Charlie Holliday
union rep
John Nielsen
factory supervisor
Anthony Allgood
visitor

Mathew Baynton

college receptionist

Pearce Quigley

chandler

Paul Antony-Barber

Nigel

Meg Wynn-Owen

mirror lady

Selina Cadell

Mrs Joyce

Tom Price

man

Céline Sallette

secretary

Celia Shuman

neighbour

Joanna Croll

tour guide

Jack Bence

Ricky

Tim Fitzhigham

bearded author

Chloe Bale

hotel receptionist

Dolby Digital/DT/SDDS

Colour/Prints by

Technicolor

[2.35:1]

Distributor

Warner Bros

Distributors (UK)

11,592 ft +7 frames

How Much Does Your Building Weigh, Mr. Foster?

United Kingdom/Spain/France 2009

Directors: Norberto López Amado, Carlos Carcas

Le Corbusier was one of the first architects to pounce on film as a means of self-promotion. He not only co-directed a tour of his Villa Savoye in 1929, but made sure he starred in it too. Eighty years on, and with the echoes of Howard Roark's rant in *The Fountainhead* in our ears ("I don't consult, I don't cooperate, I don't collaborate... the only quality I respect in men... a self-sufficient ego"), Norberto López Amado and Carlos Carcas's documentary about British starchitect Norman Foster proves that not much has changed: the ego's alive and well, and the big screen is still handy for a spot of legacy building.

Regardless of whether you like his designs or not, the man behind such landmarks as London's 'Gherkin', Germany's Reichstag and, most recently, Beijing's gargantuan airport is a deserving subject. Foster's 'hi-tech' architectural vision is now ubiquitous throughout the world thanks in part to his many imitators.

But from the film's opening quote – "Sometimes I think I see things others don't" – it's clear that we're in the territory of the authorised biography. For the most part, it's an ode to Foster's trademark materials, glass and steel as the camera spectacularly swoops, dives and glides up facades, over rooftops, along bridges, the cinematography and fast-paced editing mimicking the style of Foster's work: smooth, sleek and aiming right at your jaw.

The greatest-hits tour kicks off with Foster's early success – the Willis Faber & Dumas headquarters in Ipswich, a giant office complex which first demonstrated Foster's predilection for democratic, transparent structures – and it ends with his plans for the desert eco-city Masdar (which dissenters have called the ideal Bond villain's lair, but there's no room for such talk here). At times, with on-message cultural groupies and smiling Foster employees

SYNOPSIS A documentary about British architect Norman Foster, following his career from working in Manchester town hall to being head of his own architectural practice with commissions across the world. Footage of many of Foster's buildings (among them the Willis Faber & Dumas building in Ipswich, the Reichstag in Berlin, the Hearst Tower in New York and 30 St Mary Axe – 'the Gherkin' – in London) are interspersed with interviews with artists, collaborators and employees, as well as Foster himself.



Man of steel and glass: Norman Foster

and collaborators testifying to his work ethic and brilliance, it feels like you're stuck in a corporate video pitch. As always, when the minds and lives of cultural giants are concerned, access all areas comes with certain restrictions. But there's a difference between treading lightly (see Sydney Pollack's charming if a bit too polite tribute to his friend, the architect Frank Gehry) and full-throttle hagiography.

Deyan Sudjic, author of the official Foster biography, provides the soft-spoken, sensuous narration, using the word beautiful a lot (even to describe the paper Foster draws on). When Sudjic stops drooling and lets Foster speak we get something near insight. Calm, cool and entirely un-Roark like, the architect discusses all manner of topics, from his first job to his love of flying, as well as the influence of visionary architect, engineer and inventor Buckminster Fuller. Sadly, though, this is very much a posed portrait. The nearest we get to seeing Foster in action are shots of him skiing.

"How much does your building weigh?" was Fuller's provocation to Foster to make him consider how efficient the design of his Sainsbury Centre of 1978 was. Foster's response was 5,328 tonnes and this huge figure made him rethink his entire attitude towards architecture. One has the feeling that if you were to pose the same question about the film to the directors, and indeed to Art Commissioners, the production company founded by Foster's wife that appears on the film's credits, it might just be back to the drawing board too.

CREDITS

Directed by Norberto López Amado, Carlos Carcas
Producer Elena Ochoa
Written by Deyan Sudjic
Director of Photography Valentín Álvarez
Film Editor Paco Cízcar
Music by/Music Production Joan Valent
Production Companies An Art Commissioners production in association with Aiete Ariane Films With the participation of Canal+ With the support of Gobierno de España, Ministerio de Cultura, ICAA
Executive Producers Antonio Sanz, Zurich: Roger Neuburger, Berlin: Marc Haferbusch
Producer China (Beijing/Hong

SYNOPSIS Indonesia, 2004. On a trip with her producer boyfriend Didier when the tsunami hits, French TV journalist Marie almost drowns; she experiences a vision of the afterlife. When they return to Paris, Didier persuades Marie to take a break from work.

In London, 12-year-old twins Marcus and Jason put up a front of normality for social services so that they won't be taken away from their alcoholic mother. While running an errand, Jason is knocked over by a van. Marcus is taken in by foster carers.

San Francisco. George, formerly a professional psychic, has rejected his potentially lucrative abilities because of the emotional strain of communicating with the dead. Lonely, he takes up a cooking class and there begins a promising relationship with Melanie. When Melanie discovers his ability, she requests a reading but stops coming to the classes after the upsetting results.

In Switzerland, Marie meets an expert on near-death experiences who persuades her to write a book. Marcus seeks an expert to help him commune with his dead brother but discovers only charlatans. When Marcus's cap falls off, he is delayed from getting on an underground train on which a bomb explodes moments later. George flees to London to start afresh.

Marie gives a talk at the London Book Fair. George is drawn to the fair and is compelled by Marie. Brought to the fair by his foster parents, Marcus recognises George from his dormant website; he persuades George to attempt a séance with Jason. Grateful, Marcus tells George where Marie is staying. George arranges to meet her and has a premonition of their first kiss.

Kong):
Patrick Carr
Line Producers
Paloma López Vázquez
China (Beijing/Hong Kong):
Ronnie Shum
Berlin:
Nicole Melzer
NY:
Gwen Bialic
Associate Producers
Andrés Santana
Imanol Uribe

Production Managers
Alejandro Grande Sevilla
China (Beijing/Hong Kong):
May Yu

China (Beijing/Hong Kong) – Beijing:
Li Xiang

Berlin:
Hendrik Müller

France:
Luis Gutiérrez

UK:
Paul Hills

NY:
Andrea Roa

Riyadh:
Cesar Ruiz de Diego

Production Co-ordinators
Sonia Barral

UK:
Nicola Mairs

Lewis Partovi

Accounting
Eva Nicolás Amorós

Françoise Faye

Location Managers

Zurich:
Riet Caspessa

China (Beijing/Hong Kong) – Hong Kong:
Cindy Yu

Kenny Chan

China (Beijing/Hong Kong):
Nick Ng

UK – London:
David Kennaway

UK – Manchester:
Mark O'Hanlon

NY:
Christopher Menges

Post-production Supervisor

Rosa María Sogorb

Assistant Directors

China (Beijing/Hong Kong):
1st: Thomas Lee

Berlin:
1st: Hakan Cirac

UK Aerial Director of Photography

Jeremy Braven

Cameramen

China (Beijing/Hong Kong):
Patrick Carr

China (Beijing/Hong Kong) – Beijing:
Samuel Bradford

Camera Operators

Madrid:
Paco Sánchez Polo

Borja Pozuelo

Gonzalo Cort

Jairme Calatayud

Raúl Cadenas

Steadicam Operators

Berlin:
Alexander Traumann

UK:
Simon Baker

UK Gaffers

José Ruiz

Julian White

Key Grips

China (Beijing/Hong Kong):
Louis Cheong

Berlin:
Vincent Botsch

France:
Julio Fernández

UK:
Dave Wells

Motion Graphics

Pasos Largos

Pablo Santa María

Rafa Aumente

Iñaki Imaz

Ricardo Gómez
Pablo Jiménez
Oscar Perea
Soloists
Piano:
Joan Valent
Cello:
Emmanuelle Bleuse
Clarinet:
Marcelli Minaya
Orchestra
Bratislava Symphony
Orchestra
Conductor:
David Hernando
Orchestration
Michael Doherty
Jazz Arrangements
Tony Cuenza
Music Adviser
Paco Cárdenas
Sound Designer
Fernando Pocostales
UK Sound Recordists
Danny Hambrook
Martin Beresford
Adam Laschinger
Sound Re-recording Mixer
Manuel Cora

WITH

Norman Foster
interviewee
Tony Hunt
engineer
George Weidenfeld
publisher & writer
Richard Rogers
architect
Bono
musician, U2
Deyan Sudjic
Paul Goldberger
writers & architectural critics
Carl Abbott
architect
Alain De Botton
writer & broadcaster
Anish Kapoor
Richard Serra
Anthony Caro
Richard Long
artists
Spencer De Grey
David Nelson
senior partners, co-heads of design, Foster + Partners
Narinder Sago
architect, design board member, Foster + Partners
Ben Cowd
architect
Nigel Danvey
senior partner, design director, Foster + Partners
Mouzhan Majidi
CEO, Foster + Partners
Guo-Qiang Cai
artist
Loretta Law
resident partner, Beijing, Foster + Partners
Stefan Behling
senior partner, design director, Foster + Partners
Ricky Burdett
professor Architecture & Urbanism LSE
Jürgen Häpp
associate partner, Foster + Partners
Gerard Evenden
senior partner, design director, Foster + Partners

Narrated by
Deyan Sudjic

In Colour
[1.85:1]

Distributor
Dogwoof Pictures

I Spit on Your Grave

USA 2010

Director: Steven R. Monroe
With Sarah Butler, Jeff Branson, Daniel Franzese, Rodney Eastman
Certificate 18 107m 45s

Meir Zarchi's 1978 rape-revenge picture earned notoriety on the video nasties list and has its defenders, but remains an inept, exploitative shocker. Its biggest problem is an imbalance that makes it a hard watch – the filmmakers are so much more interested in the rape (which goes on forever) than in setting up or developing the story (which just goes through the motions) that it's impossible not to feel the movie's main attraction is an hour or so of watching a girl being brutally assaulted rather than the mostly cursory sequences in which she gets even.

Director Steven R. Monroe (whose career tracks from the interesting *House of 9* through cable perennials such as *Ogre*, *It Waits* and *Sasquatch Mountain*) solves most of Zarchi's script problems: it's the same story but now has a suspenseful build-up, thought-through interplay among the villains, an emphasis on verbal as well as physical abuse which punches up the horror and takes away the monotony, and filled-in plot holes. Things proceed as in the old movie, as Jennifer (Sarah Butler) is held down and raped, but once the point has been made, she blacks out and we mostly skip the last three violations. Zarchi only delivered one strong payback scene (a bathtub castration); here, all the villains get individual horrible fates, which focus on specific body parts (Andy's face, Stanley's eyes, Johnny's teeth and penis, Sheriff Storch's ass) and reward them for specific evil acts.

SYNOPSIS Jennifer Hills, a novelist, rents a cabin in an isolated rural area to work on a book. At a gas station, she humiliates Johnny, a cocky local who comes on to her, in front of his cronies Stanley and Andy. Later, with slow-witted Matthew, Johnny's crew barge into the cabin and intimidate Jennifer, who is relieved when Sheriff Storch arrives. However, Storch is in league with the gang. The men rape Jennifer, intending to kill her in the morning. Jennifer throws herself into a river and is washed away. She hides in a shack in the woods, recovering and plotting revenge. She devises elaborate, gruesome punishments for Andy, who is tipped into a bath of lye, and voyeur Stanley, whose eyes are pecked out by crows. After killing Johnny, Jennifer goes to Storch's home, implying a threat against his young daughter and prompting him to come after her and fall into her clutches. Jennifer rigs up a shotgun inserted into Storch's rectum, set to be triggered by a rope tied to Matthew – whose jerks discharge the gun, killing them both.

These nasty bits are credibly improvised (Monroe carefully establishes early on that the tools are at hand in a nearby shed) but have a *Saw*-ish ingenuity.

This all works for an audience (who *doesn't* like watching a rapist sheriff getting his guts blown out from the inside?), and Butler makes a credibly cracked and righteous angel of vengeance, but it doesn't really add anything to, say, the subplot about the rapist probation officer who gets his comeuppance in *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (2009). There are social issues in affluent, independent city girl Jennifer's status as a living affront to rural, ignorant, low-class, ugly, insecure, hate-filled men, but the film can't afford to be complicated about its melodrama: the thugs accuse Jennifer of looking down on them but she pointedly doesn't express any negative attitude on class grounds, and even when she comes back for revenge belittles them not for their backgrounds but for their actions (which, in this context, makes her saintly). The villains all apologise and beg for mercy, but Jennifer's verdict is 'sorry isn't enough' – asking us to gloat over their sufferings exactly as they did over hers, without any complicating Wes Craven-style indictment of the urge to violence.

— Kim Newman

CREDITS

Directed by
Steven R. Monroe

Produced by
Lisa Hansen

Paul Hertzberg

Screenplay

Stuart Morse
Based on Meir Zarchi's motion picture *Day of the Woman*

Cinematographer

Neil Lisk

Editor

Daniel Duncan

Production Designer

Dins Danielson

Music by/Score

Orchestration

Corey Allen Jackson

@Family of the Year Productions, LLC

Production Companies

A Cinetel Films

presentation in

association with Anchor

Bay Films and Meir

Zarchi

A film by Steven R.

Monroe

Executive Producers

Meir Zarchi

Alan Ostroff

Jeff Klein

Gary Needle

Co-producers

Neil Elman

Bill Berry

Daniel Gilboy

Line Producer/Unit Production Manager

Sarah J. Donohue

Production Supervisor

Taeko Masuyama

Production Accountant

Kristina Soderquist

Location Manager

Phillip Brooks

Post-production Supervisor

Adam Driscoll

Assistant Directors

1st: Jeffrey David Fuller

2nd: Jennifer Williamson

Script Supervisors

Jennifer J. Collins

Eve Butterly

Casting

Danny Roth

Gaffer

John Gregory Edwards

Key Grip

Justin Seyb

Animation/Visual Effects

Lux VFX

Additional Visual Effects

Digital FX, Inc.

Special Effects Supervisor

Kenneth Speed

Set Decorator

Ernest J. Levron Jr

Prop Master

Tim McGarity

Costume Designer

Bonnie Stauch

Key Make-up/Hair

Heather Henry

Special Make-up Effects Created by

Jason Collins

Elvis Jones

Special Make-up Effects

Autonomous FX

Soundtrack

"Moccasin Blues" –

Further Down; "Andy's

Harmonica Riff" –

Rodney Eastman

Sound Supervisor

Randy Kiss

Tim Archer

Kevin Barron

Stunt Co-ordinator

Russell Towery

CAST

Sarah Butler

Jennifer Hills

Jeff Branson

Johnny

Daniel Franzese

Stanley

Rodney Eastman

Andy

Chad Lindberg

Matthew

Tracey Walter

Earl

Andrew Howard

Sheriff Storch

Mollie Milligan

Mrs Storch

Saxon Sharbino

Chastity

Amber Dawn Landrum

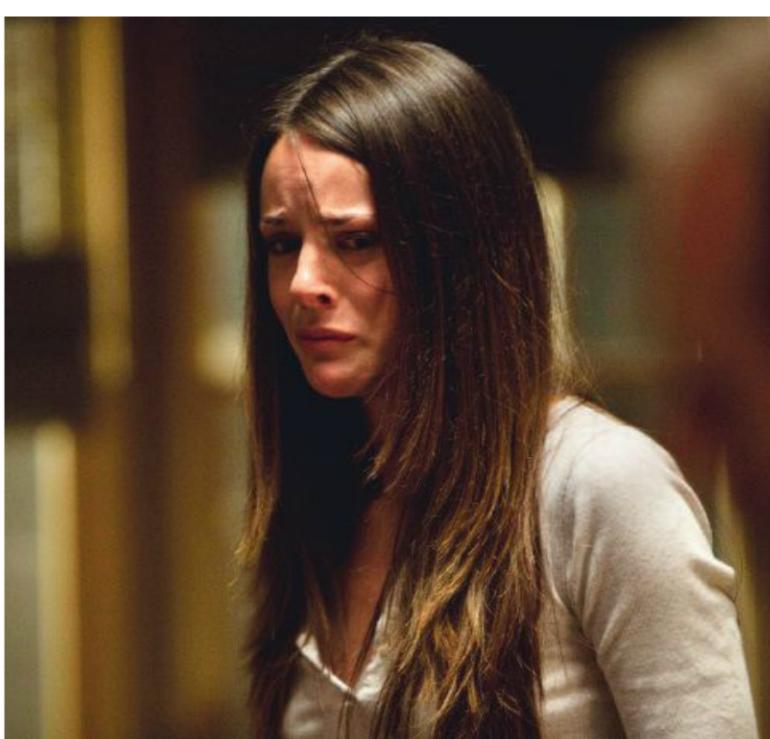
girl at gas station

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Anchor Bay Entertainment UK

9,697 ft +8 frames

(cuts of 43s. For some cuts, new material was substituted, resulting in a difference of 21s between the submitted and the classified versions.)



Novel revenge: Sarah Butler

The King's Speech

United Kingdom/
Australia/USA 2010

Director: Tom Hooper

With Colin Firth, Geoffrey Rush,
Helena Bonham Carter

Certificate 12A 118m 7s

"Surely," asks Aussie speech therapist Lionel Logue (Geoffrey Rush), "a prince's brain knows what its mouth's saying?" Albert Duke of York, the future King George VI (Colin Firth), throws him a weary glance. "You're not well acquainted with royal princes, are you?" he retorts.

In its handling of royalty, *The King's Speech* neatly has it both ways. We're given the mystique of the king's figurehead position and the danger (especially at the outbreak of war) of this emblematic role being undermined by his crippling stammer. "The nation believes that when I speak, I speak for them," he tells Logue. "And I can't speak." At the same time, David Seidler's screenplay takes mischievous glee in exposing the absurdities of royal protocol. When Albert's wife Elizabeth (Helena Bonham Carter), sheltering behind a pseudonym, first comes to consult Logue, he suggests that her husband should simply change jobs to one that doesn't involve public speaking. He's not allowed to, she tells him. "Indentured servitude?" he inquires. "Something of that nature, yes." Later, when Logue dismisses the speech therapists Albert has previously consulted as "idiots", the duke protests, "They've all been knighted." "Makes it official then," responds Logue.

This dual attitude – at once reverential and disrespectful – aligns Tom Hooper's film with John Madden's *Mrs Brown* (1997), which likewise featured a plainspoken, non-English outsider coming to the aid of a psychologically distressed royal. (Logue's insistence on calling his royal patient 'Bertie' recalls Brown addressing Queen Vic as 'wumman'.) Firth and Rush make for a no less diverting double-act than Judi Dench

and Billy Connolly, to the point where their antics (which include convulsive jaw-wobbling and rolling on the floor) threaten to take over the movie – though Bonham Carter's Elizabeth, a fount of emotional warmth in a family sorely in need of it, holds her own with more than a hint of mischief. Instructed by Logue to sit on her husband's stomach and bounce up and down, she chirps gaily, "This is actually quite good fun." Other supporting roles risk toppling into caricature – not least Timothy Spall, reprising his orotund Churchill from *Jackboots on Whitehall* – though Michael Gambon effectively sketches in George V as a hidebound old monster, regarding the radio microphone with patrician distaste: "This family has been reduced to those lowest of creatures. We've become *actors*."

Although he plays up the odd-couple comedy, Hooper knows how to bring out the anguish behind the humour (as he did in 2009's *The Damned United* and his 2006 TV movie *Longford*). Bertie's stammer, he makes clear, stems from years of abuse in an emotionally dysfunctional family, browbeaten by his martinet of a father and overshadowed by his far more self-assured older brother David (the future Edward VIII, played by Guy Pearce as a preening socialite). There's a telling moment when, on the death of his father, David collapses in tears into the arms of his mother Queen Mary (Claire Bloom). Behind her son's back the old lady's hands flap bemusedly; hugging was evidently never on the British royal curriculum.

Rush excels himself in a rich, humorous performance, slyly sending up his reputation for occasional hamming with some interpolated passages of ripely overacted Shakespeare. But ultimately this is Firth's film, confirming his status as one of our finest screen actors, with a matchless line in agonisingly repressed Brits. Though he never overplays the pathos of the reluctant future king, he makes us feel it in the simplest lines. "What are friends for?" Logue asks rhetorically at one point. Bertie stares at him bleakly. "I wouldn't know," he responds.

— Philip Kemp

SYNOPSIS London 1925. King George V's younger son, Albert Duke of York, has to give a speech at the opening of the British Empire Exhibition. His nervous stammer makes his words unintelligible.

Nine years later. Bertie (as he's known to the family) has tried various speech therapists without success. His wife Elizabeth hears of an Australian therapist, Lionel Logue, whose unorthodox methods are said to be successful. She visits Logue, calling herself Mrs Johnson, and asks him to come and see her husband. Logue tells her that his patients must come to him. Intrigued by Logue's outspokenness, Elizabeth persuades Bertie to visit him. Bertie starts making progress under Lionel's eccentric guidance.

George V dies, and Bertie's self-confident, philandering brother David succeeds to the throne as Edward VIII, but his association with American divorcee Wallis Simpson causes concern – especially when he announces that he intends to marry her. The Archbishop of Canterbury and Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin tell him he must abdicate. Bertie, realising he may become king, is angry and terrified; he quarrels with Lionel and tells him their sessions are over.

Edward VIII abdicates; Bertie succeeds him as George VI. Elizabeth persuades him to consult Lionel again, and with the therapist's help he negotiates the responses at his coronation without disaster. On 3 September 1939, Neville Chamberlain declares war with Germany. With Lionel guiding him, the king makes a nine-minute radio broadcast rallying his people. Afterwards he and his family stand on the balcony of Buckingham Palace, cheered by a vast crowd.



Stammer horror: Colin Firth, Helena Bonham Carter

CREDITS

Directed by

Tom Hooper

Produced by

Iain Canning

Emile Sherman

Gareth Unwin

Screenplay

David Seidler

Director of Photography

Danny Cohen

Film Editor

Tariq Anwar

Production Designer

Eve Stewart

Composer

Alexandre Desplat

UK Film Council, Speaking Film Productions Ltd

Production Companies

The Weinstein

Company and UK Film

Council present in

association with

Momentum Pictures,

Aegis Film Fund,

Molinare London,

FilmNation

Entertainment One See-

Saw Films/Bedlam

production

A film by Tom Hooper

Initially developed with

Joan Lane of Wild

Thyme Productions

Developed and

supported by Richard

Price of RPTA

Developed with

Buckland Productions

and Charles Dorfman

Made with the support

of the National Lottery

through the UK Film

Council's Development

Fund and Premiere

Fund

Executive Producers

Geoffrey Rush

Tim Smith

Paul Brett

Mark Foligno

Harvey Weinstein

Bob Weinstein

Co-executive Producers

Deepak Sikka

Lisbeth Savill

Phil Hope

Co-producers

Peter Heslop

Simon Egan

Line Producer

Peter Heslop

Associate Producer

Charles Dorfman

Production Manager

Erica Bensly

Production Co-ordinator

Fiona Garland

Production Accountant

Marilyn Goldsworthy

Location Managers

Jamie Lengyel

David Broder

Post-production Supervisor

Emma Zee

Assistant Directors

1st: Martin Harrison

2nd: Chris Stoaling

2nd Unit

1st: Guy Heeley

Script Supervisor

Cathy Doubleday

Casting Director

Nina Gold

Camera Operators

A: Zac Nicholson

B: Danny Cohen

Steadicam Operator

Zac Nicholson

Gaffer

Paul McGeachan

Visual Effects

Molinare London

Special Effects Supervisor

Mark Holt

Supervising Art Director

Judy Farr

Prop Master

Bruce Bigg

Construction Manager

Alan Chesters

Costume Designer

Jenny Beavan

Costume Supervisor

Marco Scotti

Make-up/Hair Designer

Frances Hannon

Hair/Make-up Artists

Nana Fischer

Carmel Jackson

Christine Whitney

Paul Gooch

2nd Unit:

Sharon O'Brien

Helen Barrett

Cathy Burczak

Karen Cohen

Sarah Grispo

Maureen Hetherington

Lisa Pickering

Helena Bonham Carter
Queen Elizabeth
Guy Pearce
'David' King Edward VIII
Timothy Spall
Winston Churchill
Derek Jacobi
Archbishop Cosmo Lang
Jennifer Ehle
Myrtle Logue
Anthony Andrews
Stanley Baldwin
Claire Bloom
Queen Mary
Eve Best
Wallis Simpson
Michael Gambon
King George V
Robert Portal
equestri
Richard Dixon
private secretary
Paul Trussell
chauffeur
Adrian Scarborough
BBC radio announcer

Andrew Havill
Robert Wood

Charles Armstrong
BBC technician

Roger Hammond
Dr Blandine-Bentharn

Calum Gittins
Laurie Logue

Dominic Applewhite
Valentine Logue

Ben Wimsett
Anthony Logue

Freya Wilson
Princess Elizabeth

Ramona Marquez
Princess Margaret

David Bamber
theatre director

Jake Hathaway
Willie

Patrick Rycart
Lord Wigram

Teresa Gallagher
nurse

Simon Chandler
Lord Dawson

Orlando Wells
Duke of Kent

Tim Downie
Duke of Gloucester

Dick Ward
butler

John Albasiny
footman

Danny Emes
boy in Regent's Park

John Warnaby
steward

Roger Parrott
Neville Chamberlain

Dolby Digital

Colour by

DeLuxe

[1.85:1]

Distributor

Momentum Pictures

10,630 ft frames

Certified 15 by the BBFC on 15/10/2010;

changed to 12A on

21/10/2010 after

appeal from the distributor.

CAST

Colin Firth

'Albert' King George VI

Geoffrey Rush

Lionel Logue

Life Goes On

United Kingdom 2009

Director: Sangeeta Datta

With Sharmila Tagore, Girish Karnad, Om Puri, Soha Ali Khan

Certificate 12A 120m 16s

Shakespeare has long fascinated Indian filmmakers: *The Comedy of Errors*, for example, has been adapted as *Do Dooni Char* (1968), *Angoor* (1982) and *Bade Miyan Chote Miyan* (1998); *Macbeth* adaption *Maqbool* (2003) transposed Shakespeare to Indian gangland, as did *Omkara*, a 2006 version of *Othello*. *Kaliyattam* (1997), meanwhile, relocated the Moor to the esoteric world of the Keralan dance form Theyyam.

Now debut director Sangeeta Datta (who was associate director on Rituparno Ghosh's *The Last Lear*, 2007) uses the King Lear framework as a platform to explore a variety of themes, chief of which is loss. Set in London, *Life Goes On* looks at how immigrant Bengali doctor Sanjay, his three daughters and friend Alok are affected by the death of Sanjay's wife Manju. The result is a moving evocation of grief and bereavement which effectively utilises melodrama in the style of Bengali master Ritwik Ghatak, who is referenced in the film. There are references too to the great Satyajit Ray in the way the film mirrors his fascination for the minutiae of family life. Like Ray, Datta crams in details that sometimes become apparent only on a second viewing; though some of these, such as references to the poetry of Rabindranath Tagore and Jibanananda Das, might be abstruse for the uninitiated, in the context of the film they add layers of meaning.

While staying true to her central theme of bereavement, Datta also finds time to explore the fading art of *adda* – a long, free-ranging conversation between friends, which Ray described as a 'talkathon' and dealt with entertainingly in *The Visitor* (1991). She creates an accurate portrayal of the upper echelons of Indian immigrant life in London while at the same time exploring the lasting effects of the Partition of India in 1947 and the anti-Islamic prejudice that continues today among some

educated Hindus who experienced it.

Robert Shacklady's magnificent digital cinematography contrasts London's autumnal beauty with the sadness of the film's characters; terrific acting by veteran Indian actors (strongly supported by a young British cast) also aids Datta immeasurably. As Manju, the graceful mother, wife and friend who dies at the outset, Sharmila Tagore is the soul of the film, making flashback appearances throughout. Girish Karnad as Sanjay and Om Puri as best friend Alok effortlessly convey the world-weariness and pathos their roles demand. The film benefits too from an excellent score by composer Soumik Datta, who blends Bengali folk, Tagore's songs and Western and Indian classical notations with a range of world music, including French hip hop, to great effect.

This otherwise admirable film is marred, however, by the director shoeboorning in a Bollywood-style romance between Manju's drama-student daughter Dia and her boyfriend Imtiaz (played by Soha Ali Khan and Rez Kempton, otherwise first-rate), culminating in one of cinema's most awkward kissing sequences, in which both parties look as if they wish they were elsewhere. Datta is also a little heavyhanded in her use of direct quotations from *King Lear* and rather obvious in choosing it as the graduation play in which Dia appears. But these are minor blemishes in an otherwise accomplished first feature, one that manages the feat of being both a paean to death and a celebration of life.

● Naman Ramachandran

CREDITS

Directed by Sangeeta Datta

Written by Sangeeta Datta

Director of Photography Robert Shacklady

Editor Arghyakamal Mitra

Art Direction/ Production Designer Vipul Sangol

Music Composer Soumik Datta

©SD Films LLP

Production Companies

Stormglass Productions
Produced by SD Films
LLP

A Sangeeta Datta film
Executive Producers

SG Films

Gautami Bhattacharya

Sandip Patel

Line Production

SG Films

Sandip Patel

Gautami Bhattacharya

Production Manager

Rikin Trivedi

Location Management

SG Films

Sandip Patel

Gautami Bhattacharya

Post-production

Producer

Sybille Mansour

Associate Creative

Director

Korak Ghosh

Assistant Directors

1st Ian Dray

Sound Design/Mixing

Biswadeep Chatterjee

Choreography

Trafalgar Square Dance

Sequence:

Gauri Sharma Tripathi

Anniversary Party

Sequence:

Anusha Subramanyam

Production Sound

Mixer

Simon Gillman

2nd Unit Soundman

Steven

Sound Recordist

India Unit:

Sanjay Chatterjee

SYNOPSIS London, the present. Dr Sanjay Banerjee is a pillar of the Indian community. When his wife Manju dies suddenly, he and his daughters Lolita, Tulika and Dia gather at the Banerjee home with widower Alok, a family friend, to deal with their grief and prepare for the funeral.

Lolita is struggling to cope with the strain of bringing up two babies, while her banker husband John faces financial ruin due to the recession. Tulika, who is in a lesbian relationship that's frowned upon by the Indian community, wants to be a sports journalist; her big break coincides with her mother's funeral. Dia, a drama student still living at home, is pregnant by her Muslim boyfriend Imtiaz. Already reeling from his wife's death, Sanjay is forced to confront his prejudices about the Islamic faith, which date back to his childhood in India at the time of Partition. Sanjay forbids Dia to see Imtiaz again but she defies him. Sanjay spends the night walking across the city and has an epiphany of sorts. Imtiaz finds him at dawn and takes him home. Alok confesses that he once had a one-night stand with Manju, and Lolita is the product of their union. Sanjay takes this in his stride. At Manju's funeral, Imtiaz is treated as a family member; Alok walks away.

2nd: Jaspreet Pandoher

2nd Unit

1st: Steve Murphy

Script Supervisor/

Continuity

Preeti Mallick

Additional Script

Workshops

Seema Anand

Manav Majumdar

Preeta Mallick

Meghna Gupta

Tuli Ghosh

Lolita Dhar

India Unit Director

of Photography

Avik Mukhopadhyay

Gaffer

Bernhard Rostoski

Stylist/Wardrobe

Aindrila Ghosh

India Unit Costume

Shibu Das

Make-up/Hair

Rosie Kor

2nd Unit:

Suman Jalaf

India Unit Make-up

Tarun Chakraborty

Lyrics

Rabindranath Tagore

Javed Akhtar

Playback Featuring

Abhijeet Bhattacharya

Pramita Mallick

Soundtrack

"Madhubata Ritayatey

(Rigveda)" – Pramita

Mallick;

"Zindagi/

Bluebells" – Abhijeet

Bhattacharya, Reena

Bhardwaj, Fiona Bevan;

"Sakhi Kunjo shajai go"

– Sohini Alam; "Dubaili

Rey" – Shorn Datta;

"Turnhey yaad rahoohn"

– Tobi Money

Rekho/Sakhi bhabana

kaharey boley" –

Sangeeta Datta; "Sakhi

prem kisey hui hai" –

Sangeeta Datta, Reena

Bhardwaj, Ranjana

Ghatak, Unnati

Dasgupta; "Vaishnava

Janato" – Sangeeta

Datta, Ranjana Ghatak,

Pavit Dhadhyalla, Shibani

Datta, Kiran Datta, Advik

Banerjee; "Babul Mora"

– Bireswar Gautam;

"Lost at Night"

Sound Design/Mixing

Biswadeep Chatterjee

Choreography

Trafalgar Square Dance

Sequence:

Gauri Sharma Tripathi

Anniversary Party

Sequence:

Anusha Subramanyam

Production Sound

Mixer

Simon Gillman

2nd Unit Soundman

Steven

Sound Recordist

India Unit:

Sanjay Chatterjee

CAST

Sharmila Tagore

Manju Banerjee

Girish Karnad

Dr Sanjay Banerjee

Om Puri

Alok

Soha Ali Khan

Dia Banerjee

Rez Kempton

Imtiaz

Neerja Naik

Tulika 'Tuli' Banerjee

Mukulika Banerjee

Lolita Banerjee

Christopher Hatherall

John

Stef Patten

Maria

Fiona Bevan

bar singer

Lord Meghnad Desai

Sanjay's friend 4

Aria Banerjee Watts

Aria

Rinku Roy

Prarthana

Purakayastha

Anon Sidiqa

Shomita Basak

dancers

Rishi Ganguly

boy patient

Alison Sutcliffe

drama teacher

Rene Weis

King Lear

Sara Whitehouse

Goneril

Sophie Alderson

Ragan

Matt Lacey

Burgundy

Charlie Henniker

France

Max Pritchard

King's attendant

Faith Knight

banker lady

Rikin Trivedi

Sanjay's driver

Mona Kabir

doctor

Misha Crosby

Abbas, violin player

Andrew Young

Peter, banker

Will McDonald

bank receptionist

Charlie Whately-Smith

waiting patient

Alex Robertson

man at Leicester Square

Anirudha Chakladar

Sanjay's friend 1

Korak Ghosh

neighbour man 1

Vandana Talwar

lady 1

Sanjeev Talwar

neighbour man 2

Sandeep Garcha

lady 2

Aindrila Ghosh

lady 3

Mrs Johal

lady 4

Aparna Roy Chaudari

lady 5

Rinku Roy

lady 6

Dipen Mukhopadhyay

Sanjay's friend 2

Adhir Ganguly

Sanjay's friend 3

Aditi Chakladar

lady 7

Deepali Chakladar

lady 8

Yuvraj Basra

Lolita's baby

Anawar Sarder

Probir Das

Akash Mallick

Sagar Das

Monoj Sen

rioters

Ramita Ghosh

Sanjay's mother

Ananda Gupta

Dilip Mama

Willow

barn owl

Gurdain Singh

jazz club band (tabla)

Taalis

jazz club band (percussionist)

Nick Sammuels

jazz club band (saxophonist)

Mark Oliver Shelton

Cresswell

French rapper

Yasmin Omotosho

audience 1

Zain Hasnain

audience 2

Shaaliini Naik

audience 3

Roshni Patel

audience 5



No sleep till Battersea: Colin Farrell

London Boulevard

USA 2010

Director: William Monahan

With Colin Farrell, Keira Knightley, David Thewlis, Anna Friel

Certificate 18 102m 50s

Talk about diamonds in the rough. Among a mess of unresolved plot holes, sketchy Sarf Laandan accents and grotesque, gratuitous violence, *London Boulevard* offers two actors in small parts the chance to shine. As a manic-depressive nympho and a dissolute, drug-addled thesp, married couple Anna Friel and David Thewlis show off their utter class and pinch all the best lines, including Thewlis's corking description of upper-crust actress Charlotte: "If it wasn't for Monica Bellucci, she'd be the most raped woman in European cinema."

Unfortunately, that's about as much praise as can sincerely be levelled at the directorial debut of William Monahan, hitherto best known for his Oscar-winning adaptation of Alan Mak and Felix Chong's *Infernal Affairs*, *The Departed* (2006). *London Boulevard* is another adaptation, this time of a novel by Ken Bruen – and it shows. The film reeks of enforced compression, with plot threads introduced from nowhere or dropped without so much as a by-your-leave.

Colin Farrell takes the lead as Harry Mitchel, an ex-con trying to go straight and embarking on an improbable relationship with vulnerable megastar Charlotte (Keira Knightley), a woman whose face is plastered on billboards on both sides of the Atlantic but who selects her minders from among the

ragtag bunch at the local boozer. Unsurprisingly, Mitch finds it's not so easy to leave his old life behind him: Ray Winstone's gay mobster kingpin Gant will stop at nothing to conscript him into his gang, as a series of psychotic torture scenes make stomach-twistingly clear. And so our hero faces that classic dilemma of screen ex-cons through the ages: will he take the easy path or the righteous one?

It's hardly the most original set-up, but Monahan has had no problem in the past breathing new life into clichéd scenarios, in films such as *Body of Lies* (2008) and *Edge of Darkness* (2010). A sweetly retro title sequence – all split screens and swipes, set to the Yardbirds' 'Heart Full of Soul' – is promising (if derivative) stuff, suggesting a return to such no-nonsense classics as *Get Carter*. It's not long, however, before this slick simplicity is replaced by throbbing drum-and-bass music and a hard-edged, *noirish* vision of London's concrete tunnels and looming estates. There's a languid interlude of sun-dappled cornfields set to whimsical strings as Mitch and Charlotte escape to her rural retreat, but before long we're back in a Battersea boozer. The editing's so rapid we barely have time to acclimatise to one atmosphere before we're whipped off, jarringly, to the next, with the effect that we just can't find our feet. For a neat piece of synecdoche, see Farrell's costumes: one minute he's in cream linen and cashmere, the next a spivved-up suit, the next ripped jeans and leathers. And where exactly is an ex-con on £47 a week benefit finding all these clothes? It may seem a petty point but it illustrates the tonal clash that finally does for the film. Like its hero, it seems to be suffering from something of an identity crisis.

— Catherine Wheatley

CREDITS

Directed by
William Monahan

Produced by
Graham King
Tim Headington
Quentin Curtis
William Monahan

Screenplay
William Monahan

Based on the book by
Ken Bruen

**Director of
Photography**
Chris Menges

Edited by
Dody Dorn
Robb Sullivan

Production Designer
Martin Childs
Music
Sergio Pizzorno

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**Production
Companies**

GK Films presents a
William Monahan film
A GK Films production
A Henceforth Pictures

production
A Projection Pictures
production

Executive Producers
Redmond Morris
Colin Vaines

Co-producer
Ted Sacheck

Line Producer

LA Production:

Vincent Joliet

Associate Producers
Justine Suzanne Jones
Jacob Rush
**Unit Production
Manager**
Rachel Neale
Production Supervisor
LA Production:
Katherine Thumann

**Production
Co-ordinator**
Jo Waller

**Production
Accountant**
John Eccleston

**Supervising Location
Manager**

David Broder

Location Managers

Camilla Stephenson

LA Production:

David Miller

**Post-production
Supervisor**

David Drescher

Assistant Directors

1st: Richard Styles

2nd: Carlos Fidel

LA Production

1st: Todd Lent

Script Supervisor

Lbbie Barr

Casting Directors

Nina Gold

LA Production:

Loree Booth

Camera Operators

A: Chris Menges

B: Luke Menges

Steadicam Operators

Alistair Rae

LA Production:

Michael Stumpf

Gaffers

Lee Walters

LA Production:

Chris Prampin

Key Grips

Adrian McCarthy

LA Production:

Mike Popovich

Visual Effects

Molinare

**Additional Visual
Effects**

Supervisor:

David Altenau

Executive Producer:

Tim Jacobsen

Special Effects

Supervisor

Stuart Brisdon

Additional Editor

Yon Van Kline

**Supervising Art
Director**

Celia Bobak

Property Masters

Arthur Wicks

LA Production:

Kevin Hughes

Construction Manager

Gene D'Crue

Costume Designer

Odile Dicks-Mireaux

Costume Supervisor

Nigel Egerton

**Hair/Make-up
Designer**

Christine Blundell

**Senior Hair/Make-up
Artist**

Vincent Joliet

Lesa Warrener

Hair/Make-up Artist
Chloé Meddings
Stylist
LA Production:
Erica Rosenast
Main/End Titles
Designed and
Produced by

Prologue Films

Title Designer:
Henry Hobson

Title Producer:
Unjoo Lee Byars

Executive Producer:
Kyle Cooper

End Title Crawl

Scarlet Letters

Score Performed by

Sergio Pizzorno

The London

Metropolitan Orchestra

Score Conducted by

Andrew Brown

Orchestration

Jessica Dannheisser

Strings Arranged by

Sergio Pizzorno

Music Supervisor

Jen Monnar

Score Produced by

Steve McLaughlin

Sergio Pizzorno

Soundtrack

"Heart Full of Soul"; "The

Train Kept a-Rollin'" –

The Yardbirds; "Stray

Cat Blues" – The Rolling

Stones; "Devil in Me" –

22-20s; "Come See Me"

– The Pretty Things;

"Street Girl"; "It'll Never

Be Me" – The Electric

Banana; "The Letter" –

The Box Tops; "One

Track Mind" – The

Knickerbockers;

"Minstrel Boy"; "The

Green Hills of Tyrol";

"She Moves through the

Fair" – Dominic Murphy;

"Beautiful Day"; "The

Green Fairy"; "Club Foot"

– Kasabian;

"Subterranean

Homesick Blues" – Bob

Dylan: "Sun o diluba dil

kiyeh sada" – Anu

Malik, Asha Bhosle;

"Celebrity Suicide" –

Derek & Clive [i.e.

Dudley Moore, Peter

Cook]

Music Consultants

Howard Paar

Sergio Pizzorno

John Coyne

Production Sound

Mixer

David Stephenson

Sound Mixer

LA Production:

Rob Newell

Re-recording Mixers

Michael Minkler

Tony Lambert

**Supervising Sound
Editor**

Per Hallberg

Stunt Co-ordinator

Lee Sheward

CAST

Colin Farrell
Harry 'Mitch' Mitchel

Keira Knightley

Charlotte

David Thewlis
Jordan

Anna Friel
Briony

Ben Chaplin
Billy

Ray Winstone
Gant

Eddie Marsan
DI Bailey

Sanjeev Bhaskar
Dr Raju

Stephen Graham
Danny

Ophelia Lovibond
Bower

Whiteboy
Velibor Topic

Storbor

Lee Boardman
Lee

Alan Williams
Joe

Jonathan Cullen
Anthony Trent

Robert Wilcox
ravaged guard

Tony Way
lone paparazzo

Tim Plester
paparazzo 1

Jake Abraham
paparazzo 2

Damir Koluder
Storbor's friend

Nick Bartlett
Beaumont

Matt King
Fletcher

Jamie Blackley
the footballer

Gregory Foreman
kid with footballer

Sarah Niles
hospital matron

Jonathan Coyne
heavy 1

Bob Mercer
heavy 2

Elly Fairman
Gant's wife

Oliver Wood
bottom feeder 1

Jonny Leigh-Wright
bottom feeder 2

Hainsley Lloyd
Bennett

unfortunate student

Michelle Asante
woman in Brixton flat

Julian Littman
Alfons

Sameena Zehra
woman at Ashmole

Estate

Giles Terera
waiter

Gerald Home
undertaker

**Dolby Digital/DTS/
SDDS**

In Colour

[1.85:1]

Distributor

Entertainment Film

Distributors Ltd

9,255 ft +11 frames

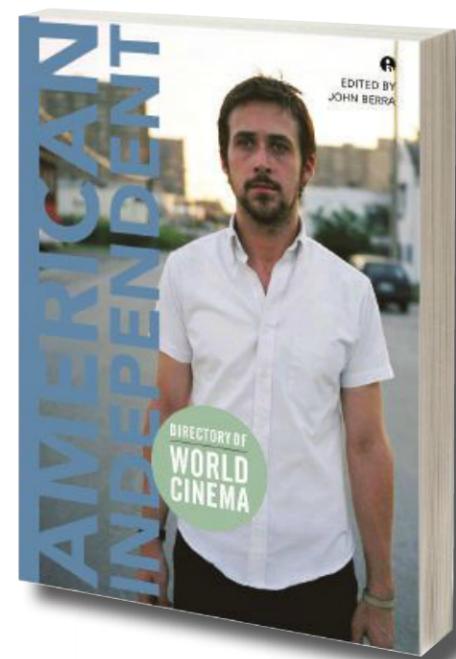
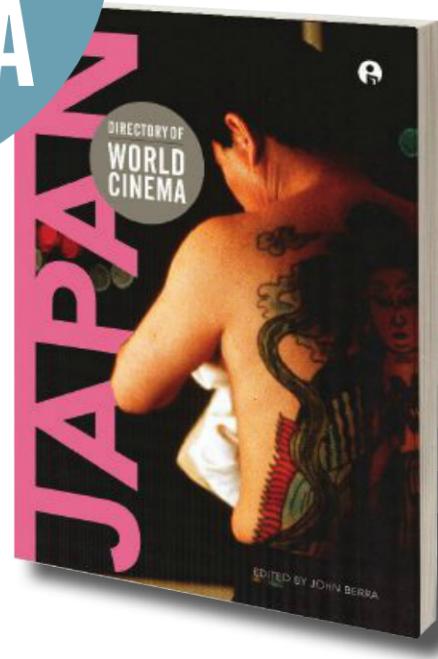
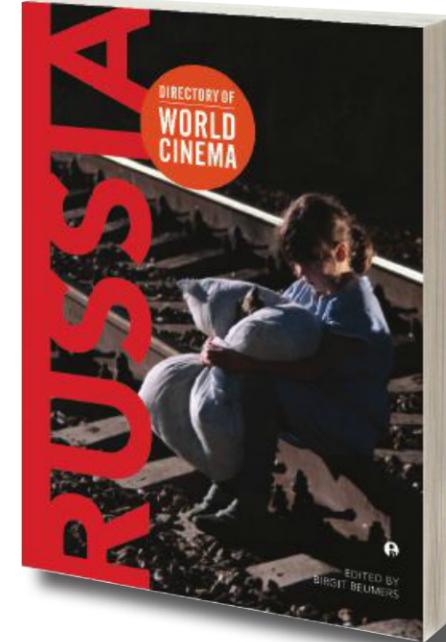
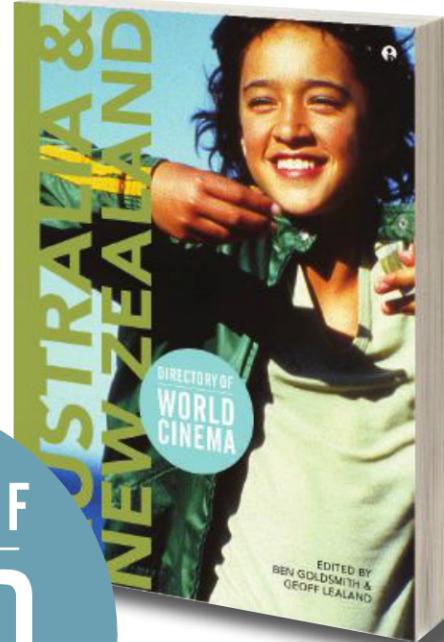
SYNOPSIS South London, the present. Newly released from Pentonville Prison after serving three years for GBH, Harry Mitchel is looking to go straight, to the disdain of his friend Billy, with whom he's staying. A chance meeting in a local pub leads him to beautiful, reclusive actress Charlotte; hunted by the paparazzi and terrified of leaving her house, she offers Mitchel a job as her minder. However, Billy's gangster boss Gant has other ideas, informing Mitchel he wants him for one of his henchmen.

Mitchel's friend Joe is beaten to death by a pair of kids from the local estate; Mitchel tracks the kids down but at the last minute decides not to kill them. With Gant threatening the life of his sister Briony, Mitchel enlists the help of Charlotte's friend Jordan to kill the mob leader and his men. He is too late to save Billy and Briony, but succeeds in assassinating Gant. Jordan kills corrupt policeman Bailey. As Mitchel prepares to join Charlotte – with whom he has begun a relationship – in Los Angeles, he is fatally stabbed by the boy who killed Joe. Jordan prepares for a shootout with the police. Charlotte stands isolated on a hotel balcony.

— Catherine Wheatley

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Men on the Bridge

Germany/Turkey/The Netherlands/Finland 2009

Director: Asli Özge

With Fikret Portakal, Murat Tokgöz, Umut İlker, Cemile İlker

Certificate 15 90m 29s

Turkish cinema continues to flower. Latest evidence arrives in the form of Asli Ozge's *Men on the Bridge*, a strangely synchronous offering to another fine recent film, *10 to 11* by Ozge's compatriot Pelin Esmer – both debuts directed by women, using mainly non-professional actors, which started as documentary projects before morphing into features, albeit bearing clear traces of their real-life origins. Both represent the best of what's happening in sections of their country's cinema: a willingness to grapple with the big themes and ask the right questions, a socially engaged cinema largely untainted by didacticism, which is generally purveyed in solidly naturalist style and firmly embedded in ordinary lives and real worlds, usually at the sharp end of economic circumstance – Ozge herself has referred to a "late realism" in Turkish cinema.

It's easy to speculate on the underlying causes fermenting all of this. Turkey's suspension between tradition and modernity is as pronounced as ever, an ambiguity accentuated by its perch on the cusp of east and west (actualised here by the bridge across the Bosphorus in Istanbul). These frictions play out in the lives of Ozge's three young male protagonists, each of whom plies his trade on the bridge. Easygoing traffic policeman Murat, a devout Muslim from a village in the east, seems out of place in Istanbul, typified by his abortive efforts with women he meets on the internet. Passive Umut, driver of a shared taxi, is the most harried figure, as he tries to scrape enough money together to satisfy his wife Cemile's increasingly vociferous yearnings for a bigger flat. Fikret, a teenage Roma who sells tulips to drivers gridlocked on the bridge, can't find a job or a girlfriend, the former owing to racism and a chronic lack of education.

Ozge's film organises a mosaic of snapshot moments, and apart from one fleeting encounter the three lives under scrutiny don't intersect. None of the three is any closer to finding what he's searching for by the end, as if their lives are as deadlocked and static as the traffic on the bridge. That refusal of pat answers or redemptive moments feels absolutely right; and while there's no varnishing of Murat's love of guns and knee-jerk hostility to Kurdish 'terrorists', for example, or Fikret's laziness when he does get a proper job, Ozge takes pains to make us understand why these men are as they are.

Two of the characters (Umut and Fikret) are played by themselves, but Murat is played by his brother (the Turkish police force forbids its officers to play themselves on screen). The resulting hybrid of documentary and

fiction is less sophisticated than Pedro Costa's or Jia Zhangke's, say, but none the worse for it; it's still intimate and immediate, accurate in its textures and details, and gives rise to a strangely productive awkwardness. Some of Ozge's choices of material from her characters' lives can seem too obvious – Fikret being chucked out of a shop, for no reason other than prejudice, we've seen many times before; one or two other scenes, as when Cemile and Umut row violently, have a Cassavetes-like rawness that's difficult to watch, and can feel like trespassing. Occasionally too it's as if themes are being shoehorned in somewhat schematically, particularly around nationalism and the Kurdish question; but you can't fault the ambition.

In the end, the impression that lingers most is of Istanbul itself, revealed here in its less salubrious or just plain dull aspects; it's the city's most memorable celluloid portrayal since *Uzak* (2002). Ozge's film speaks to a very specific Turkish reality, one that usually lies hidden to the casual visitor, but aspects will inevitably resonate more widely in an era of precarious, globalised austerity.  **Kieron Corless**

CREDITS

Directed by Asli Özge

Produced by Fabian Massah

Written by Asli Özge

Director of Photography Emre Erkmen

Edited by Vessela Martschewski

Aylin Zoi Tinel

Christof Schertenleib

©Endorphine
Production, Yeni Sinemacılık, Kaliber Film, Rush Hour Films

Production

Companies

Endorphine Production, Yeni Sinemacılık, Kaliber Film, Bayerischer Rundfunk, ZDF/3Sat present with the support of Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Deutscher Filmförderfonds, T.C. Kultur für Turizm Bakanlığı, Rotterdam Media Fonds, Het Nederlands Fonds voor de Film and the participation of YLE

Co-produced by

Sevil Demirci

Mete Gümürhan

Associate Producer Nicolas Grupe

Production Manager Benan Baf

Casting Meltem Gemicici

Renda Güner

Chief Lighting Technician Hatip Karabudak

Additional Editing Christoph Brunner

Soundtrack "Nevim var ki" – Fikret Portakal, Ibrahim Çayirci, Salih Küp; "Holocaust" – Fikret Portakal, Ibrahim Çayirci

Sound Designer Daniel Weis

Sound Recordists Bilge Bingül

Gürkan Özkaya

Tolga Yelekçi

Bülent Kılıç

Sound Mix Florian Beck

Police Consultant Gökhan Tokgöz

CAST

Fikret Portakal

Fikret

Murat Tokgöz

Murat

SYNOPSIS Istanbul, the present. The lives of three characters are linked by the Bosphorus Bridge, where they often work. Unemployed Fikret, a teenage Roma, lives in a hovel without running water and sells tulips to drivers gridlocked on the bridge. Murat, a twentysomething policeman from eastern Turkey, directs traffic on the bridge. Umut, also in his twenties, drives a shared taxi across it.

Fikret's attempts to find a better job are hampered by his complete lack of education. When he finds a job in a café, his clumsiness and lackadaisical attitude soon get him fired. He is single, complaining that there are no girls in the neighbourhood. Murat, a devout Muslim, is also searching for a girlfriend, but on the internet – two dates with women he finds online prove abortive. He misses his mother and the village where he grew up. Umut lives in a small flat with his wife Cemile, a babysitter, who feels trapped and unsatisfied in the marriage. Cemile is eager they rent a bigger flat, but their combined incomes won't stretch to the increased costs. Cemile would like to work in an office, but has no computer skills. As their frustration builds, they argue more often and bitterly. Cemile wants to leave Umut, but can't because she's financially dependent on him. Fikret's friend asks him if he wants to be a flower seller all his life. Murat might get drafted into the army after failing an exam. He sits alone on the bank of the Bosphorus and takes a call from his mother.



Umut İlker, Cemile İlker

Midgets vs Mascots

USA 2008

Director: Ron Carlson

With Rick Howland, Akie Kotabe, Mark Hapka, Brittney Powell

Certificate 18 85m 19s

Albert Einstein once said that "Only two things are infinite – universe and stupidity." But Einstein was spared the excruciating task of watching *Midgets vs Mascots*, or he would surely have changed his mind, since this 'film', glorying in its own crassness and cretinous provocations, is surely hitting the rock bottom of human idiocy.

Pitched as "*Borat-meets-Jackass*", this so-called "raunchy shockumentary" follows five little people battling against five mascots for a multimillion-dollar prize in a series of mildly dangerous and humiliating games, from alligator wrestling to 'midget porn', strung together by repetitive drunken antics.

Borat was offensive but also subversive and brainy; *Jackass* was admittedly dumb but had an unscripted freshness and novelty about it, reflecting some aspects of the skate subculture and the nihilism of Generation Y. *Midgets vs Monsters*, however, is content merely to give life to the intoxicated fantasies of any borderline racist frat boy at the end of a sorority party.

Visibly made on a very low budget, *Midgets vs Mascots* can't afford spectacular stunts or 'real' public unrest; consequently its unique selling point, its entire *raison d'être* even, is systematically to show the finger to political correctness – regardless of how pathetic the outcome may be. What's left is a tiresome succession of off-colour jokes (at the expense of anyone but white and normal-sized people), grotesque nudity, unimpressive dares, lame staged fights and, of course, lots of farts and vomit. Because it seems there's nothing funnier than watching a female little person getting punched in the face or uttering the N-word as loud as possible in a family restaurant until people leave.  **Guillaume Gendron**

CREDITS

Directed by Ron Carlson

Produced by Brad Keller

Joey Stewart

Producer Ms Terry Mann

Writer Ms Terry Mann

Co-writer Kevin Andounian

Story Ms Terry Mann

Director of Photography Marc Carter

Editors Christian Hoffman

Mike Mendez

Production Designer Jason Hammond

Composer John D'Andrea

Production Company A Ms Terry Mann project

Executive Producers

Ms Terry Mann and a bunch of idiots that invested in this movie

Associate Producers Gary Coleman

Kevin Andounian

Unit Production Manager Lori Madrid

Production Manager 2nd Unit: Mark Mahlo

Production Supervisor Stewart Young

Production Co-ordinator Jeffrey Weiss

Production Accountant Larry Powell

Location Manager Mark Hodge

2nd Unit Directors Joey Stewart

Brad Keller

Assistant Directors 1st: Claire Peberdy

2nd: Asha Vyas

2nd: Dee L. Evans

SYNOPSIS In his will, the late porn mogul Big Red – a little person who had a successful career as a mascot – pits his ungrateful son against his venal wife Kayla by having them set up a competition of two teams (five mascots versus five ‘midgets’) fighting for his \$10 million inheritance. Red’s son coaches the ‘midgets’, captained by has-been child actor Gary Coleman, while Kayla assembles a team of drunk and disorderly men in mascot uniforms. The two teams fail to complete the 30 rounds in the 30 days allotted by Big Red, who unexpectedly reappears during the final ceremony and splits the money between the ten participants, stating that his faked death and the ensuing competition were intended as a lesson for his greedy inheritors, who end up with nothing.

2nd Unit
2nd: Renee Marsella
Script Supervisor
Nicole Garcea
Casting Directors
LA:
Robyn Owen
Texas:
Toni Cobb Brock
Camera Operator
A: Ian Ellis
Gaffer
Jason Croft
Key Grip
Andy Lohrenz
Visual Effects
Wired Creative
Special Effects
Co-ordinator
Steve Krieger
Property Master
Adrian H. Ankersheil
Construction
Co-ordinator
Eric Whitney
Wardrobe Designer
Lisa Albertson
Wardrobe Supervisor
Lyle Huchton
Key Make-up
Sheila Moore
Make-up Artist
Liz McCracken
Main Title Design
ELM Creative
Eric Silva

Steve Robinson
Music Supervisors

Michael Lloyd
Julie Houlihan

Soundtrack

“Eye of the Tiger” –
Survivor; “You’re the
Best” – Jo Bean’
Esposito; “J. Brown’s
Stomp” – Ian Coyne;
“Ain’t Tough Enough” –
Lisa Z.; “Faster, Faster” –
PBR All Stars; “99
Bottles of Beer”; “Friday
Night”; “Deuces are
Wild” – Howell-
Freundlich Overdrive;
“Poppin’ Thump Thing” –
Tad Sisler; “Kiss Kiss” –
Erik Hawk; “Pretty
Boy” – Daalderop.
Rajaneesh Dwivedu;

“Wave Your Flag” – Gary
Romero; “Everybody
Get Down” – Tad Sisler,
Andrew Fraga Jr.; “Take
Me Out to the
Ballgame”; “Stuck in the
Middle” – Stealers
Wheel; “We are the
Champions” – Terra
Jole; “Dominate” –
Frank Klepacki;
“Champion” – RuPaul

Sound Design
GW Pope III
Location Sound Mixer

Skip Frazee

Re-recording Mixer/

Supervising Sound

Editor

Michael McDonald

Stunt Co-ordinator

Scott Roland

CAST

Rick Howland

Richard ‘Big Red’ Bush

Akie Kotabe

Deng Man

Mark Hapka

Little Richard

Brittney Powell

Bonnie

Paul Rae

Eddie

Russell

Russell

Bob Bledsoe

Ira, Spartan Man

Joe Gatto

Geoffrey

Josh Sussman

Bunny

Lemone

Richard Trapp

Gator

P.J. Marino
Rod, Taco

Terra Jole

Leanne

Jason Mewes

Steve Kriger

sheriffs

Gary Coleman

Scottie Pippen

Larsa Pippen

Preston Pippen

Justin Pippen

Ron Jeremy

Tava Smiley

themselves

In Colour
[1.85:1]

Distributor
Kaleidoscope Home
Entertainment

7,678 ft +8 frames

Morning Glory

USA/United Kingdom 2010

Director: Roger Michell

With Rachel McAdams, Harrison

Ford, Diane Keaton, Patrick Wilson

Certificate 12A 107m 21s

Morning Glory triumphantly celebrates morning news shows, those soft-boiled mélanges of briskly glossed-over world news and ‘human interest’ segments. Their value is battled over by veteran reporter Mike Pomeroy (Harrison Ford) and Becky Fuller (Rachel McAdams), the new executive producer of *Daybreak*, a fictional programme dead last in the ratings. Mild entertainment beats hard news decisively: “The world has been debating news versus entertainment for years, and guess what?” Becky snaps at Mike. “You lost!” The film agrees, celebrating careerism and brute achievement as a goal in itself.

The workplace setting recalls 1987’s *Broadcast News*, while the story of an ambitious New Jersey girl making good in the big city recalls 1988’s *Working Girl*. But unlike *Broadcast News* Roger Michell’s film doesn’t worry about the ethics of reporting actual news versus pandering to audiences’ lowest-common-denominator impulses – it’s all in favour of doing whatever has to be done for ratings – and its sense of upward ambition isn’t as acutely aware of class distinctions as Melanie Griffith’s attempts to escape her background. As in screenwriter Aline Brosh McKenna’s previous *The Devil Wears Prada* (2006), upward mobility for young women for its own sake is celebrated no matter how vapid the means.

Settled on those basic questions, *Morning Glory* is ferociously incoherent on many other points. Becky grew up a newshound with a class chip on her shoulder; a three-year local college graduate, she pitches herself during an interview as a traditional torch-bearer whose parents didn’t pay for her to do “bong hits and discuss semiotics”. She’s long idolised Mike for his Pulitzer Prize-winning coverage in Kosovo and elsewhere, but is remorselessly fixated on making fluffy entertainment for bored morning viewers. Mike wants to report hard news; she asks him not to bore everyone. So what use is the reverence?

Throughout the film, all broadcasts come with a scroll at the bottom compressing disasters – the ongoing recession, hurricanes et al – into a passing matter of no importance. It might be a satirical jab but the film suppresses such subversion of its cosy worldview. Relentlessly, neurotically perky, McAdams is as grating as can be, and the third act shortens the ups and downs into one reversal per scene, generating about four anticlimaxes in ten minutes. The watchable film devolves into saluting expediency and clips primed for YouTube, an active insult to the journalistic traditions the film’s heroine ostensibly treasures. And as a facile romantic comedy, it’s the kind of film in which McAdams literally lets her hair down after having sex. 

CREDITS

Supervisor
Louise Seymour

2nd Unit Director
Video Unit:

Don Roy King

Assistant Directors
1st: Michael E. Steele

2nd: Tudor Jones

Script Supervisor
Mary Bailey

Casting
Ellen Lewis

Camera Operators
Bruce MacCallum

B: Frank G. DeMarco

B: Carlos Guerra

Steadicam Operator
Carlos Guerra

Chief Lighting
Technician

Robert Sciretta

1st Company Grip
Kevin Smyth

Visual Effects
Framestore New York

Additional:
Lola | VFX

Special Effects
Co-ordinator

J.C. Brotherhood

Art Directors
Kim Jennings

Alex DiGerlando

Set Decorator
Alyssa Winter

Property Master
Sandy Hamilton

Construction
Co-ordinators

Nick Miller

Gordon Krause

Costume Designer
Frank Fleming

Costume Supervisor
Susan J. Wright

Department Head
Make-up

Mindy Hall

Make-up Artist
Mary Anne Spano

SYNOPSIS After years of loyal service at a New Jersey morning news show, Becky Fuller is laid off. Following many unsuccessful job applications, she’s hired as executive producer on *Daybreak*, the last-place morning news show of the IBS network based in New York City. Firing creepy co-anchor Paul on her first day, Becky has to find a replacement for no money. Realising that veteran reporter Mike Pomeroy is under contract to IBS, she uses a clause to force the reluctant hard-news advocate to co-host the fluffy show. Mike’s surly participation drags the straggling show’s ratings down even further. Becky is told that the show will be cancelled in six weeks unless she can push the ratings to 1.5 million viewers. Through a variety of shake-ups – including sending the weatherman on life-threatening stunts and aggressively pursuing famous guests – she improves the show’s ratings while also finding romance with evening-news producer Adam. Mike volunteers to cover a sauerkraut festival, but instead commandeers the news truck to be at the governor’s arrest for racketeering and prostitution. The show’s viewing figures are good enough to guarantee at least another year. Becky is offered a job at NBC’s *The Today Show* but wants to stay with her new triumph. Mike reverts to his uncooperative ways and Becky goes to the interview. Realising she’ll leave, Mike performs a cute cooking segment live on air; seeing this in her meeting, Becky runs back and rejoins her show.

Croc monsieur: ‘Midgents vs Mascots’



Department Head Hair

Angel DeAngelis

Hairstylists

Tarsha Marshall

Bobby Grayson

Title Design

Lip Sync

Music Orchestrated/

Conducted by

Nicholas Dodd

Soundtrack

"Free Me", "Incredible" –

Joss Stone; "Waiting for

My Real Life to Begin" –

Colin Hay; "New Shoes" –

Paolo Nutini; "Open

Spaces 4"; "Prelude &

Fughetta in G Major" by

Johann Sebastian Bach;

"Stuck in the Middle

with You" – Michael

Bublé; "Five PM"; "Don't

Hold Me Down" – Colbie

Caillat; "Johnny Got a

Boom Boom" – Imelda

May; "Two Sleepy

People" – Hoagy

Carmichael; "Finale

from String Quartet in

B-flat Major (Op.64

No.3, Nob.67)" by

Franz Joseph Haydn –

the Kodaly Quartet;

"Happy Birthday to

You"; "Same Changes"

– The Weepies; "Candy

Shop" – 50 Cent;

"Dance of the Sugar

Plum Fairy" by Pyotr

Ilyich Tchaikovsky; "Are

You Here" – Corinne

Bailey Rae; "Gone in the

Morning" – Newton

Faulkner; "Strip Me" –

Natasha Bedingfield

Music Consultants

Karen Elliott

Abbie Lister

Sound Mixer

Tom Nelson

Re-recording Mixers

Lee Dichter

Roberto Fernandez

Warren Shaw

Supervising Sound

Editor

Warren Shaw

Co-supervising Sound

Editor

Lon Bender

Stunt Co-ordinator

Peter Buccossi

CAST

Rachel McAdams

Becky Fuller

Harrison Ford

Mike Pomeroy

Diane Keaton

Colleen Peck

Patrick Wilson

Adam Bennett

Jeff Goldblum

Jerry Barnes

John Pankow

Lenny Bergman

Matt Malloy

Ernie Appleby

Patti D'Arbanville

Becky's mom

Noah Bean

1st date

Jack Davidson

dog-walking neighbour

Vanessa Aspillaga

Anna

Jeff Hiller

Sam, Channel 9

producer

Linda Powell

Louanne

Mike Hydeck

Ralph

Joseph J. Vargas

Channel 9 director

Mario Frieson

Channel 9 technical

director

Kevin Herbst

Channel 9 associate

director

Jerome Weinstein

Fred

Stephen Park

Channel 9

weatherperson

David Fonteno

Oscar

Ty Burrell

Paul McVee

Adrian Martinez

IBS lobby guard

J. Elaine Marcos

Lisa Bartlett

Rizwan Manji

Jay Russell

Finnelly Steeves

Rick Younger

Arden Myrin

Caroline Clay

Katharine Hyde

Allen Warnock

Welker White

Maddie Corman

Jeremy Beiler

Daybreak producers

Jonathan Forte

1st intern

Kevin Pariseau

horse teeth reporter

Chris Sieber

groundhog reporter

Liz Keifer

Jerry's wife

Lauren Cohn

crafts expert

Jayne Houdyshell

stage manager

Miguel A. Hernandez

Jr

editor

Alice Callahan

gjrl at Schiller's

Miles O'Brien

IBS anchorperson

Elaine Kaufman

Bob Schieffer

Morley Safer

Chris Matthews

themselves

Don Roy King

Merv. Daybreak director

Robert Caminiti

Daybreak associate

director

Stefani L. Cohen

Daybreak timing

production assistant

Gray Winslow

Daybreak technical

director

Kristine Nielsen

fan

Paul Urcioli

IBS evening news

producer

Rosalyn Darling

Daybreak fan on plaza

Gio Perez

2nd intern

Pepper Binkley

Jerry's assistant

Steve McAuliff

animal expert

Vincent J. Robinson

bagpiper

Curtis '50 Cent'

Jackson

Tony Yayo

DJ Who Kid

Lloyd Banks

themselves

Don Hewitt Sr

Joe the cameraperson

Reed Birney

Governor Willis

Carmen M. Herlihy

Becky's assistant

Bruce Altman

Kathleen McNenny

Jason Kravits

television executives

John Bundy

magician

Dolby Digital/DTS/

SDDS

In Colour

[2.35:1]

Distributor

Paramount Pictures UK

9,661 ft +8 frames

Neds

Director: Peter Mullan

With Louise Goodall, Greg Forrest,

Conor McCarron, Joe Szula

Certificate 18 123m 41s

"One child grows up to be somebody that just loves to learn, and another child grows up to be somebody you'd just love to burn – it's a family affair." Sly Stone's lyrics date from 1971, but a year later the same contradictions are played out on the Glasgow streets in this rites-of-passage drama from Peter Mullan.

When we first meet John McGill he's made his mum proud at the primary-school prize day, in stark contrast to his older brother Barry, expelled from school altogether and currently out on the loose with his fellow gang members. These are the eponymous 'Neds', or 'Non-Educated Delinquents', as the title credits helpfully explain. Thenceforth, as quietly bookish John battles to overturn the secondary-school principal's prejudices towards him by proving himself the academic equal of anyone else in the year, the story looks set to reaffirm the connections between learning and social mobility, with our John the model pupil lifting himself out of the poverty and violence surrounding him. It doesn't happen, precisely because writer-director Mullan is not a man to deliver such reassuring bromides. Far from some 'I had it tough' chronicle of tribulation and triumph, what we have here is a purposefully unsettling exploration of how paternalism in its many forms leads only to underachievement and thwarted hopes.

If Mullan's first feature *Orphans* (1997) offered a nightmarish vision of curdled Glasgow family ties, and *The Magdalene Sisters* (2002) followed with an angry exposé of abusive Catholic authority, *Neds* fuses elements from both its predecessors. With a drunken bully of a father, a cowed mother, a tearaway older brother and an American auntie reminding everyone of their limited horizons, this is no vision of cosy domesticity, while the strap-wielding teachers' attempts to enforce discipline succeed only in sending out the counterproductive

SYNOPSIS Glasgow, 1972. After his primary-school prize day, John McGill is threatened by teenage thug Canta. He asks his older brother Barry to go after Canta, but later grants his tormentor mercy. At secondary school, his brother's sorry reputation (Barry has been expelled) means that John must work his way into the top class after the principal places him in a lower stream.

Two years later, John makes friends with middle-class Julian, whose mother learns of John's poor Catholic background and sends him away. John instead finds acceptance with a local gang. He rebels at school, throws fireworks into Julian's dining room and plays his part in a gang rumble. Later Canta is welcomed into the gang, but John is unforgiving – punching him to the ground then dropping a gravestone on his head.

After Barry is jailed, John finally lays into his drunken, bullying father; his mother banishes him from the house. Out on the streets, John turns to glue-sniffing, and has a hallucinatory encounter with a statue of Christ. Summoned back home, he's asked by his father to finish him off, prompting a knife-wielding John to lay into the rival gang in the hope that he'll meet his own doom. He survives but proves unable to kill his father.

Given a second chance at school, John is placed in the remedial class. The presence of brain-damaged Canta reminds him of his misdeeds; he becomes his victim's protector during a class trip to a safari park.



The vest years of our lives: Conor McCarron

message that violence is power.

Certainly, the film's narrative strategy is daring in the way it encourages the viewer to buy into young John's aspirations to self-betterment before we watch in horror as he lurches way off the straight and narrow. One minute he's singled out by the Latin tutor for a top mark, the next he's holding his end up in slash-and-run rumbles unfolding in urban-planned green spaces now demarcated tribal territory. Even more horrifying sights are to come: John (Conor McCarron), viciously dropping a gravestone on the head of his onetime tormentor Canta (Gary Milligan), or prowling the streets with a kitchen knife taped to each hand.

It's asking a lot of audiences to maintain their investment in a protagonist who strays quite so far, notwithstanding first-timer McCarron's uncanny ability to sustain a suggestion of vulnerability even in the character's most aggressive moments. Mullan, though, is evidently offering analysis rather than mollifying cliché. John's actions are clearly patterned to be readable as a young man's efforts to escape the boxes into which various forms of authority would confine him. On the street, he's initially deemed a wimp barely worthy of his hard-man brother Barry's name; in school, he

battles to make his way from the second stream to the top tier; at home, all is silence and submission, such is the shadow cast by his toolmaker father (Mullan himself, expertly highlighting the weakness behind the bullish exterior).

The turning point comes when John befriends a posh lad at summer school, but as soon as the latter's mother finds out what school John goes to, the chill sets in. He's Catholic, he's working class, and should stay where he belongs. No route out of the poverty trap in early 1970s Glasgow then. So John instead determines to make a name for himself in gang culture, given that force seems to win the day everywhere else. His streetwise swagger feeds back into the rest of his life, as he goads the teachers at school and eventually hits back against his bullying dad.

John's encounter with a very Glaswegian Christ (a statue stepping off the cross to give the wee lad a kicking) and the closing sequence (in, of all places, a safari park) show that Mullan is by no means exclusively tied to humourless realism. All of which indicates a highly personal mode of filmmaking, one that (unlike the British norm) hasn't been developed into docile compromise. It doesn't always come off, but the cavils are outweighed by the brilliantly spontaneous dialogue and utterly natural performances from a host of teenage non-professionals. The recreation of the early 1970s is forensically vivid without being fetishised. But above all it's the simmering anger that comes across: anger at the education system so caught up in its own authoritarian process that it has little insight into, or compassion for, the very young people it's supposed to be building; anger at the fathers who treat their families as territory to expunge their own frustrations and so facilitate a continuing cycle of domination, rebellion and suffering. By no means an easy film, but surely a major achievement.

• Trevor Johnston

Credits for this film were unavailable at the time of going to press and will be published in the March issue.

Nénette

France 2010

Director: Nicolas Philibert

No one expected Oscar-worthy performances from the non-human cast of Nicolas Philibert's 1996 documentary *Un animal, des animaux*, which went behind the scenes at Paris's Museum of Natural History. But Philibert's fascinated camera captured a dynamic, between the straw-stuffed animals and their beautician-carers, that was every bit as palpable as in any buddy-movie. The director returns to our relationship with animals in *Nénette*, which gives the 40-year-old orang-utan of the title the sort of lingering close-ups that have traditionally been associated with a Gena Rowlands or a Liv Ullmann.

Philibert cleaves the film in two: while the visual emphasis is on the captivating Nénette, holed up in the menagerie in the Jardin des Plantes in Paris, the audio track is an aural mosaic of interviews, eavesdropped conversations and manipulated sound design. Biographical tidbits about Nénette are forthcoming, most coloured by anthropomorphism ("She's had three husbands, and wore them all out"), but she is destined to remain an enigma; the unseen speakers reveal far more about themselves than we could ever learn about Nénette. Philibert has called his subject "a receptacle for our fantasies. She is a projection screen... The monkey house where she lives is almost like a confessional. When they talk about Nénette, people talk about themselves..."

Sure enough, there is the woman who wonders whether Nénette misses her home country, before adding with a sigh: "I miss mine." Another onlooker says, "I think she's depressed, totally depressed" – the remark emphatic enough to suggest that it takes one to know one. A zookeeper remembers when Nénette used to play up to the media, only for the cameras to move on eventually to her younger and more comical companions. "It's hard for an old female to see new ones turn up," the woman observes. "Me too. I find it hard with the young keepers."

Conservation issues are addressed, with one interviewee observing that Nénette is a victim of her own rarity: "If there were more of her around, she'd probably be in the jungle." But any campaigning the film does remains implicit in the images of its evidently intelligent leading lady looking morose, bored or lost in a daydream. A tooting bassoon accompanies extreme close-ups of her warm chestnut eyes, cracked leather fingers and tree-bark face; hypnotic at first, the long takes come to seem like Mexican standoffs between Nénette and her audience (who are likened at one point to prison visitors), and between Nénette and us. The film has a wearying, corrosive effect on the viewer, without even the spiritual grace notes offered by, say, *Au hasard Balthazar* (1966).

Ultimately the film is one of those get-out-what-you-put-in experiments

SYNOPSIS A documentary composed entirely of shots of orang-utans in the Jardin des Plantes in the centre of Paris. The focus is predominantly on Nénette, a 40-year-old Bornean orang-utan who arrived at the zoo in 1972. Over images of the zoo animals we hear the voices of visitors, as well as interviews with the keepers who have formed a bond with Nénette. They piece together the story of her life in captivity, during which time she has had three mates and four offspring, including her son Tübo, with whom she still shares her glass-fronted cage.

in watching; as with Abbas Kiarostami's *Shirin* (2008), it's possible that each audience member will take away from the picture a subtly different narrative based on the faintest tics and twitches in the subject's face. Nénette can't help but seem as aloof in front of Philibert's camera as an untouchable celebrity refusing to cooperate with a biographer. At various points she also comes to resemble a Beckettian comic complete with props (a bouquet-like lettuce, a patterned blanket worn like a veil), a living art installation à la Tilda Swinton in Cornelia Parker's "The Maybe" and a screen beauty more glorious and tormented than any starlet in the studio system.  **Ryan Gilbey**

CREDITS

A film by

Nicolas Philibert

Producers

Serge Lalou

Alain Esmery

Photography

Katell Dijan

Nicolas Philibert

Editor

Nicolas Philibert

Original Music

Philippe Hersant

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Production Companies

Les Films d'Ici present a co-production with

Forum des Images

Production Manager

Katya Laraison

Post-production Supervisor

Sophie Vermersch

Soundtrack

"Dobri dien romale" –

Eric Slabiak, Franck

Anastasio

Sound

Jean Umansky

Laurent Gabot

Sound Mixer

Julien Cloquet

WITH

the voices of

Abel Morin

Lucie Morin

Agnès Laurent

Georges Peltier

Diego Feduzi

Ludovico Lanni

Gaya Jiji

Eric Slabiak

Muriel Combeau

Christelle Hano

Charlotte Uzu

Agathe Berman

Judit Kélé

Zhang Xuequin

Linda De Zitter

Maria Charles

Marianne Lalou

The Next Three Days

USA 2010

Director: Paul Haggis

With Russell Crowe, Elizabeth Banks, Brian Dennehy, Olivia Wilde

Certificate 12A 132m 58s

"Jusqu'où iriez-vous par amour?" How far would you go for love? The merest glance at the trailer for Fred Cavayé's 2008 thriller *Pour elle* prompts the suspicion that this was a French movie made with half an eye on an American remake, and so it has proved. It's a terrific pulp conceit after all – when a teacher's wife is thrown into jail for a crime she didn't commit, he has no choice but to break her out. That said, the source material isn't without its limitations – the process by which an ordinary bloke becomes a master jailbreaker is hardly to be taken seriously – perhaps prompting expectations that the US version might be pitched as a mid-budget potboiler. All the more surprising, then, that awards-garlanded Paul Haggis has turned his attention to it.

Given that his previous directorial credits *Crash* (2004) and *In the Valley of Elah* (2007) were predicated on a forceful engagement with contemporary social issues, put on screen in a bulldozing manner that won both admirers and detractors, it's certainly a change of tack for Haggis to deliver a straightforward genre assignment like this (though he's done a bit of oot scripting in the meantime). Since *Pour elle* was never released in the US, American audiences will come to it fresh, but for British viewers who caught its UK release as *Anything for Her*, the disappointment in *The Next Three Days* is just how little of his own Haggis has brought to the remake, which largely follows the template of Cavayé's source screenplay. That the running time has crept up from 96 minutes to a slightly interminable 133 can be put down to sheer bloat, notably where Haggis has

thrown money at an extended finale in which literature teacher John Brennan (Russell Crowe) tries to make it out of Pittsburgh before police lockdown. Car chases, thronged freeways, foot-pounding through the subway system, crowded train stations, bustling airports – Haggis piles up a whole host of close-run things. It certainly shows us where the budget went but also falls prey to the law of diminishing returns, since every near-miss counterproductively increases the audience's certitude that Crowe will indeed evade capture.

What's frustrating is that Haggis has applied his energy to opening out what was always the most formulaic part of the story. In both versions the pattern is more or less the same: the set-up that jails the glamorous yet somehow aloof spouse (Elizabeth Banks proving rather more anodyne than Diane Kruger) is contrived but functional, yet once that's out of the way the dramatic and moral meat is really in the mid-section, where an ordinary Joe not only has to get his head round whatever it takes to free his missus, but then has to put the plan into action. This means breaking the law, putting his own neck on the line, and even killing the odd criminal scumbag en route. Classic thriller fare, it has to be said, placing an everyman figure in extraordinary jeopardy, yet it proves far more effective in the French-language incarnation. In essence, that's because we absolutely buy Vincent Lindon as a geography teacher, and he appears truly vulnerable the deeper into the underworld his quest takes him. With Crowe, on the other hand, despite his evident efforts to downsize his performance into everyday blokeishness, it's hard to believe that the Hollywood A-lister is ever going to be in real trouble when he ventures from suburbia on to the mean streets downtown.

Giving a class lecture on *Don Quixote*, Crowe's character speaks of "the triumph of irrationality" and how Cervantes shows that "we can choose to exist in a reality purely of our own making" – lessons that Haggis himself could surely have taken to heart.

 **Trevor Johnston**



Learning curve: Elizabeth Banks, Russell Crowe

CREDITS

Directed by

Paul Haggis

Produced by

Michael Nozik

Paul Haggis

Oliver Delbosc

Marc Missionnier

Screenplay

Paul Haggis

Based on the film *Pour elle*, a film by Fred Cavayé, screenplay by Fred Cavayé, Guillaume Lemans

Director of

Photography

Stéphane Fontaine

Edited by

Jo Francis

Production Designer

Laurence Bennett

Music by/Score

Produced by

Danny Elfman

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Production

Companies

Lionsgate presents a

Hwy 61 Films, Lionsgate

production

Production services by

'Shoot Colombia', RCN,

Ennovia, Cinempresa

Executive Producers

Agnès Menétrit

Anthony Katagas

Co-producer

Eugenie Grandval

Unit Production

Manager

Anthony Katagas

Production Manager

Columbia Unit:

Enrique Arango

Production

Supervisors

John P. Fedynich

2nd Unit:

David Kaplan

Additional Photography:

Robin Fischella

Production

Co-ordinators

Ashley Bearden

Additional Photography:

Frances Simonovich

Production

Accountant

Ilana McAllister

Location Managers

Andrew Ullman

2nd Unit:

David Weinstein

Additional Photography:

Kent Jackson

Post-production

Supervisor

Carl Pedregal

2nd Unit Director

Craig Haagensen

Assistant Directors

1st: Donald L. Sparks

2nd: Dieter Busch

2nd Unit

1st: Alex Gaynor

2nd: Emily McGovern

Additional Photography

1st: Mike Tropozian

2nd: Michael McCue

Columbia Unit

2nd: Hugo Ortiz

Script Supervisor

Brenda Wachel

Casting

Randi Hiller

Pittsburgh:

Donna Belajac

Aerial Director

of Photography

Helicopter Unit:

David Nowell

Camera Operators

A: Craig Haagensen

B: Stéphane Fontaine

C: Terry Bowen

C: Phil Oetiker

Additional Photography

B: Phil Oetiker

Steadicam Operator

Jim McConkey

Gaffer

James Crawford

Key Grips

Manny Duran

2nd Unit:

Shawn M. Neary

Visual Effects/

Animation

Asylum

Furious FX

Visual Effects

XY&Z Visual Effects

2D Digital Post, Inc.

Special Effects

Co-ordinator

Drew Jiritano

Art Directors

Gregory Hooper

Columbia Unit:

Diobeth Guerra

Set Designer

Eva Kamienska-Carter

Set Decorator

Linda Sutton-Doll

Bump Key Video

Created by

Sam Nozik

Property Masters

JP Jones

Additional Photography:

Jeff Angelo

Construction

Co-ordinator

Joseph Waterkotte

Costume Designer

Abigail Murray

Costume Supervisors

Gail A. Fitzgibbons

Additional Photography:

Diane Collins

Wardrobe

Columbia Unit:

Tomasia Ibarra

Department Head

Make-up Artist

Melanie Hughes-Weaver

Key Make-up Artist

Kelley Mitchell

Department Head

Hairstylist

Camille Friend

Head Hairstylist

Additional Photography:

Sacha Quarles

Main/End Title

Designed by

yu+co

End Crawl

Scarlet Letters

Score Vocals

Ayana Haviv

Cello Solos

Josephine Knight

Conductor

Rick Wentworth

Orchestrations

Steve Bartek

Edgardo Simone

David Slonaker

Soundtrack

"Waltz Trio Session" –

Giorgio Rosciglione,

Cinzia Gizzi, Gége

Munari; "Sweet

Dreams"; "Division",

"Mistake"; "Be the One"

– Moby; "Get It Cheap"

– DavidOne and Skeet;

"No Nadie" – Andres

Ayrado; "In the End",

"Don't Make a Sound"

– The Like; "This Is Final"

– Hemrys; "The Clue" –

P-Live; "Walk around the

Lake" – Lost in the Trees

Sound Designer

Wylie Stateman

Sound Mixers

Mark Ulano

Additional Photography:

Douglas Axtell

Re-recording Mixers

Marc Fishman

Daniel Leahy

Supervising Sound

Editors

Lon Bender

Renée Tondelli

Stunt Co-ordinators

Ken Quinn

Manny Siverio

CAST

Russell Crowe

John Brennan

Elizabeth Banks

Lara Brennan

Brian Dennehy

George Brennan

Lennie James

Lieutenant Nabulsi

Olivia Wilde

Nicole

Ty Simpkins

Luke Brennan

Helen Carey

Grace Brennan

Liam Neeson

Damon Pennington

Daniel Stern

Meyer Fisk

Kevin Corrigan

Alex

Jason Beghe

Detective Quinn

Aisha Hinds

Detective Collero

Tyrone Giordano

Mike

Jonathan Tucker

David

Allan Steele

Sergeant Harris

RZA

Moush

Moran Atias

Erit

Michael Buie

Mick Brennan

Remy Nozik

Jenna

Toby Green

Tyler Green

3-year-old Luke

Veronica Brown

female guard 1

Leslie Merrill

Elizabeth Gesas

Alissa Haggis

junkie

James Donis

prison major

Rachel Deacon

duty nurse

Glenn Taranto

hospital security guard

Derek Cecil

Dr Bescsey

Kaitlyn Wylde

Julie

Zachary Sondrini

Photoshop kid

Lauren Haggis

Lyla

James Ransone

Harr

Etta Cox

notary

Barry Bradford

jail guard, entry hall

Rick Warner

county jail captain

James Francis Kelly III

lab van driver

Denise Dal Vera

Eugenie

Nazanin Boniadi

Elaine

Lisa Ann Goldsmith

female guard 2

Jeff Hochendorfer

Alex's thug buddy

Quintia Mali

phone operator

Trudie Styler

Dr Byrdie Lifson

David Flick

male nurse

Fabio Polanco

phone repairman

Sean Huze

Jonathan Berry

prison guards

Tamara Gorski

Patrick Brennan

hospital guards

Brenna McDonough

Brenda

Kathy Fitzgerald

neighbour

Tom Quinn

elderly man

Melissa Jackson

Air Canada clerk

Patrick F. McDade

airport security chief

11,967 ft +1 frame

127 Hours

USA/United Kingdom/

Australia 2010

Director: Danny Boyle

With James Franco,

Amber Tamblyn, Kate Mara,

Clémence Poésy

Certificate 15 93m 34s

Danny Boyle has often stranded his leads in tight spots – marooned in paradise, stalked by zombies, banged up by Indian police – leaving audiences to wonder: "How's he going to get out of this one?" The approach reaches a kind of literal purity in *127 Hours*, whose hero is trapped between a rock and a hard place, the rock being a rock and the hard place being more rock. The film's title refers to the length of time climber Aron Ralston (played by James Franco) spent wedged in a Utah crevasse, his right arm pinned against a sandstone wall by a boulder. The fact that most viewers will know the outcome of the real-life incident on which the film is based – Ralston survived by using a blunt knife to sever his arm below the elbow – means that the film plays out less as a cliffhanger than as an extended exercise in dramatic irony and, eventually, grisly endurance viewing. The suspense, critically speaking, comes from wondering how as restlessly kinetic a director as Boyle will tackle a story about an immobile man in a confined location.

The answer, it turns out, is to treat it no less kinetically than any of his other subjects. *127 Hours* opens with overlapping shots of teeming masses (sports crowds, subway passengers, financial markets) and establishes a vibrant momentum as Ralston embarks on his solo excursion. Extreme close-ups, split screens, stunning landscapes and jittery, pixellating handlebar-cam – Ralston has his own video and stills cameras, as well as an iPod – establish a vivid aesthetic in keeping with the hyper-adrenalised lead. A chance encounter with two female hikers maintains the pace while establishing Ralston as a likeably cocky self-declared "weirdo" whose overconfidence is offset by childlike joie de vivre. This all lends the stillness that Boyle imposes after Ralston's sudden entrapment a real potency, a jolting sense of awful indifference.

But such reticence is shortlived. As if compensating for the physical

confinement, Boyle offers an excitedly externalised take on Ralston's thought-world: dream sequences, flashbacks and fantasies abound but remain tethered to the present experience. He imagines riding a rock to freedom; astrally projects himself back to a soft drink left in the car; regrets selfish behaviour towards parents and girlfriend. And when it comes to the crunch, Boyle goes into expressive overdrive, with flashes of lightning, bursts of grating, high-pitched atonality and shots that get closer to the subcutaneous action than might have been thought possible (or, for some, desirable).

Franco is a major asset here, winking charismatically then disarmingly humble; one can imagine worse people to be trapped in a crevasse with. Crucially, Franco's Ralston retains a wicked sense of humour at his own expense: he muses, when the time comes to drink his own urine, that it tastes like "a bag of piss". He seems the kind of guy to appreciate Boyle's use of Bill Withers's 'Lovely Day' on the soundtrack, or the nice irony of taking on the desert single-handed only to leave the desert single-handed.

This humility locates him somewhere in the middle of a map of recent cinematic lost boys: he's in a more acute fix than Tom Hanks in Robert Zemeckis's *Cast Away* (2000); less hapless than the Gerrals of Gus Van Sant's *Gerry* (2002); more complacent than the climbers of Kevin Macdonald's *Touching the Void* (2003); less doctrinaire than Christopher McCandless in Sean Penn's *Into the Wild* (2007).

In other ways, *127 Hours* brings to mind the *Saw* franchise of torture-porn thought-experiments, its protagonist trapped in a tight space facing the consequences of his actions with distinctly limited options and a wholly unpalatable set of tools.

Pathé Productions
Limited and Dune
Entertainment III LLC (in
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and Spain)

Production Companies
Fox Searchlight Pictures
and Pathé present in
association with Everest
Entertainment a Cloud
Eight/Decibel Films/
Darlow Smithson
production

A Danny Boyle film

Executive Producers

Bernard Bellew

John J. Kelly

François Ivernel

Cameron McCracken

Tessa Ross

Co-producers

Tom Heller

Gareth Smith

Associate Producer

Diarmaid McKeown

**Unit Production
Managers**

John J. Kelly

Bernard Bellew

**Production
Supervisors**

Duff Rich

Additional Unit:
Craig Ayers

**Production
Co-ordinator**

Craig Ayers

Production Accountant

Jack W. Haddox

Location Managers

Dennis Light

Larry Campbell

**Post-production
Supervisor**

Jeannette Haley

Assistant Directors

1st: David A. Ticotin

1st: J. Scott Smiley

2nd: Cody J. Harbaugh

2nd: Heather Toone

Johnson

Script Supervisors

Kristin Ludwin

Tracey Merle

Casting

Donna Isaacson

**Aerial Director of
Photography**

David B. Nowell

Camera Operators

C: Mike Call

Underwater: Peter

Zuccarini

Gaffers

Thomas Nievelt

Justin Andrews

Key Grips

Alan Stoddard

Daniel Courttright

Visual Effects

Union Visual Effects Ltd.

Special Effects

Erich Mingebach

Co-ordinator:

Blair Foord

Art Director

Chris DeMuri

Set Decorator

Les M. Booth

Property Master

Scott Amerman

Construction

Co-ordinator

Brent Astrop

Costume Designer

Suttipat Larlab

Costume Supervisor

Jacqueline Newell

Co-department Head

Make-up Artists

Gina Homan

Stephanie Scott

Make-up Effects

Designed/Created by

Tony Gardner and

Alterian, Inc.

Department Head Hair

Jenna Kilgrow

Main/End Titles Design

Matt Curtis, AP

Choir

The Gleehive Children's

Choir

Orchestrator/

Orchestral Conductor

Matt Dunkley

Soundtrack

"Never Hear Surf Music

"Again" - Free Blood;

"Scooby-Doo, Where Are

You?"; "Nocturne No. 2 in

E flat" by Frédéric

Chopin; "If I Rise" by A.R.

Rahman, Dido
Armstrong, Rollo
Armstrong – Dido, A.R.
Rahman: "Heart and
Soul"; "Sleeping
Monkey"; "Lovely Day" –
Bill Withers: "Ça plane
pour moi" – Plastic
Bertrand; "If You Love Me
(Really Love Me)" –
Esther Phillips; "Festival"
– Sigur Rós

Sound Designer

Glenn Freemantle

Sound Mixers

Steven C. Laneri

Douglas Cameron

Re-recording Mixers

Ian Tapp

Richard Pryke

Supervising Sound

Editor

Glenn Freemantle

Stunt Co-ordinator

Patrick J. Statham

CAST

James Franco

Aron Ralston

Amber Tamblyn

Megan

Kate Mara

Kristi

Clémence Poésy

Rana

Kate Burton

Aron's mom

Lizzy Caplan

Sonja

Sean A. Bott

Aron's friend

Koleman Stinger

Aron age 5

Treat Williams

Aron's dad

John Lawrence

Brion

Bailee Michelle

Johnson

Sonja age 10

Parker Hadley

Aron age 15

Fenton G. Quinn

Blue John

P.J. Hull

boy on sofa

Pieter Jan Brugge

Eric Meijer

Rebecca Olson

Monique Meijer

Jeffrey Wood

Andy Meijer

Norman Lehert

Dan

Xmas Lutu

helicopter co-pilot

Terry S. Mercer

helicopter pilot

Darin Southam

Zach

**Dolby Digital/DTS/
SDDS**

In Colour

[2.35:1]

Distributor

Pathé Distribution

8.421 ft +0 frames

The Portuguese Nun

Portugal/France 2009

Director: Eugène Green

With Leonor Baldaque, Ana Moreira,
Adrien Michaux, Beatriz Batarda

The Portuguese Nun is our Film of the
Month and is reviewed on page 44.

CREDITS

A film by

Eugène Green

Produced by

Luis Urbano

Sandro Aguilar

Screenplay

Eugène Green

**Director of
Photography**

Raphaël O'Byrne

Editor

Valerie Loiseleur

Art Director

Zé Branco

Production Companies

O Som e a Fúria, MACT

Productions present a

film supported by MC –

Ministério da

Cultura/ICA – Instituto

do Cinema e do

Audiovisual

Produced with

investment from FICA

With the participation of

CNC – Centre national de

la cinématographie, RTP

– Radiotelevisão

Portuguesa

A film by Eugène Green

Executive Producer

Luis Urbano

Co-produced by

Martine de Clermont

Tonnerre

**Production Manager/
Portugal Production
Manager**

Julie de Hauranne

**Portugal Production
Supervisor**

Ángela Cerveira

Supervisor

João Gasmão

**Production
Coordinator**

Portugal:

Cristina Almeida

France:

Lydia Nataf

Corinne Accardo

Assistant Directors

1st: Bruno Lourenço

2nd: Patrick Mendes

Script Supervisor

Renata Sancho

Portuguese Screenplay

Marta Lisboa

Leonor Baldaque

Gaffer

Pedro Paiva

Key Grip

Paulo Miranda

Properties

João Paulo Santos (Kid)

Hair/Make-up

Susana Queiroga

Soundtrack

"Esquina de rua"; "Mole",

"Ser aquele" – Camané

(vocals); José Manuel

Neto (Portuguese guitar),

Carlos Manuel Proença

(violin), Paulo Paz (bass);

"Não vou"; "Xale

encarnado"; "M.F." –

Aldina Duarte (vocals).

José Manuel Neto

(Portuguese guitar),

Carlos Manuel Proença

(violin)

Sound Recordists

Vasco Pimentel

Georges-Henri Mauchant

Stéphane Thibéaut

Vasco Pimentel

Georges-Henri Mauchant

Stéphane Thibéaut

Post-synchronization

Laurent Chassaigne

CAST

Leonor Baldaque

Sister Joana

Adrien Michaux

Martin Dautand

Beatriz Batarda

Madalena

Dioogo Dória

D Henrique Cunha Mello

de Lencastre

Carloto Cotta

D Sebastião

Francisco Mozos

Vasco

Eugène Green

Denis Verde

Cláudio Nascimento

Baixa official

Martim Grange

Luca

Pilar Grange

Pilar



Leonor Baldaque, Ana Moreira

Rabbit Hole

USA 2010

Director: John Cameron Mitchell

With Nicole Kidman, Aaron Eckhart,

Dianne Wiest, Tammy Blanchard

Certificate 12A 90m 54s

If the death of children and the intolerable grief associated with it are cinema's greatest taboo, it's perhaps surprising how often films have broken that taboo: the subject featured prominently in Terry George's *Reservation Road* (2007) and Clint Eastwood's *Mystic River* (2003), and was tackled as community-wide suffering in Atom Egoyan's *The Sweet Hereafter* (1997) and as a distanced half-life in Lawrence Kasdan's *The Accidental Tourist* (1988). But in James Cameron Mitchell's faithful (if gently opened up) adaptation of Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright David Lindsay-Abaire's *Rabbit Hole*, grief over the death of a child lies at the dramatic heart of the movie – like a silent, open coffin – and, as such, it has few direct comparisons. It is a sensitive, honest play, sensitively and honestly adapted (by the playwright) and sensitively and honestly directed by Mitchell – but it is circumscribed, albeit not cripplingly, by theatrical convention and

of Mitchell's previous work – the emotionally headstrong transgender musical *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (2001) and the rumbustiously, sexually explicit fresco of *Shortbus* (2006) – makes *Rabbit Hole* seem like an exercise in repression, for director and film alike, which is why the scenes in which Eckhart lets his anger explode, or Wiest freewheels with prattling honesty, feel so welcome. In concordance with the thespian containment – too undemonstrative, one feels, for Academy votes, though Miles Teller makes an impressive debut as Jason – Mitchell utilises highly disciplined *mise en scène*, leaving little room for exploration or expression in either Frank G. DeMarco's cinematography or the introspective, low-key score by Anton Sanko. Still, it's a brave – and honest – film, too discomfiting to be merely 'worthy' but, finally, too restricted to be fully emotionally or artistically satisfying.

Wally Hammond

CREDITS

Directed by

John Cameron Mitchell

Produced by

Leslie Urdang

Dean Vanech

Nicole Kidman

Per Saari

Gigi Pritzker

Screenplay

David Lindsay-Abaire

Based on his play

Director of Photography

Frank G. DeMarco

Edited by

Joe Klotz

Production Designer

Kalina Ivanov

Music

Anton Sanko

Production Companies

An Olympus Pictures,

Blossom Films, OddLot

Entertainment

production

Executive Producers

Dan Revers

William Lischak

Linda McDonough

Brian O'Shea

Co-producers

Caroline Jaczko

Geoff Linville

Associate Producer

Gemma O'Neill

Unit Production

Manager

Caroline Jaczko

Production Supervisors

Fran Giblin

2nd Unit:

Erik Weigel

Production Co-ordinator

Patricia De Paula

Accountant

Sarah Rubenstein

Location Manager

Eddy Collyns

Assistant Directors

1st: Karen Kene

2nd: Thomas K. Lee

2nd: Patrick Huber

2nd Unit

1st: David McWhirter

1st: Neil Daly

Script Supervisor

Dianne Hounsell

Casting

Sig De Miguel

Stephen Vincent

Camera Operator

George Bianchini

B: Michael Indurksy

Steadicam Operator

George Bianchini

Gaffers

Radium Cheung

2nd Unit:

Brooks Toran

Key Grips

Caswell Cooke

2nd Unit:

Melissa Guimaraes

Special Effects

Foreman

Edward A. Drohan IV
Art Director
Ola Maslik
Set Decorator
Diana Salzburg
Comic Book Design/
Illustration by
Dash Shaw
Prop Masters
Yolan Fisher
2nd Unit:
Cynthia Nibler
Construction
Co-ordinator
Peter Bundrick
Costume Designer
Ann Roth
Wardrobe Supervisor
Sonja Cizmazia
Make-up Department
Head
Kyra Panchenko
Key Make-up Artists
Amy Spiegel
2nd Unit:
Angela Levine
Department Head Hair
Colleen Callaghan
Key Hair Stylists
Joe Whitmeyer
2nd Unit:
Linda de Andrea
Main Titles
Anthony Brandonio
Orchestration
Joachim Horsley
Music Supervisor
Robin Urdang
Soundtrack
"Over the Moon" – Rick
Riso, "Ivory Tickles" –
Charlotte Polite, "Lay It
Down" – Al Green
featuring Anthony
Hamilton, "No Better
Love" – Angela
Johnson, "Look at You
Now" – Katie Herzig,
"What Do You Know" –
Beatphreak, "Don't Give
Up on Us" – David Soul,
"Miss High Heels" – The
Steps, "Anthem" – Ron
Fountenberry, "Bored" –
Zhang Zhene, "Nail" –
Anton Sanko, "Oh Oh" –
The Daylights

Production Sound
Mixers
Jan McLaughlin
Re-recording Mixer
Ron Bochar
Supervising Sound
Editor
Ben Cheah
Stunt Co-ordinator
Doug Crosby

CAST
Nicole Kidman
Becca Corbett
Aaron Eckhart
Howie Corbett

Dianne Wiest
Nat
Tammy Blanchard
Izzy
Miles Teller
Jason
Giancarlo Esposito
Auggie
Jon Tenney
Rick
Sandra Oh
Gabby
Patricia Kalember
Peg
Julie Lauren
Debbie
Stephen Mailer
Kevin
Mike Doyle
Craig
Roberta Wallach
Rhonda
Ali Marsh
Donna
Yetta Gottesman
Ana
Colin Mitchell
Sam
Deidre Goodwin
Reema
Rob Campbell
Bob
Jennifer Roszell
Sotheby's receptionist
Mary Louise Burke
librarian
Jay Wilkison
Gary
Ben Hudson
Sammy
Salli Saffioti
Lori
Ursula Clare Parker
Lilly
Phoenix List
Danny Corbett
Sandi Carroll
Abby
Teresa Kelsey
Mary
Sara Jane Blazo
Jason's mother
Brady Parisella
Caden

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[1.85:1]

Distributor
Metrodome Distribution
Ltd

8.181 ft +0 frames

SYNOPSIS Queens, New York, the present. Becca and Howie Corbett are grieving; it is later revealed that their four-year-old son Danny was run over and killed eight months ago, having dashed into the road after the family dog.

Becca plants shrubs in their garden, only for them to be accidentally trampled on by neighbour Peg. Howie regularly views footage of Danny on his iPhone. Becca's sister Izzy visits, and reveals that she's pregnant. Howie asks Becca whether she would consider having another child; she says it's too soon. Howie takes Becca to a therapy group where she is annoyed by the remarks of Christian members and asks to leave.

Later, Becca sees a teenage boy on a school bus and follows it. Her mother describes her own grief over the suicide of Becca's brother. Becca announces to Howie that they should sell their house. Following the school bus again, Becca makes contact with the boy, Jason. He reveals himself to be the driver of the car that killed Danny, and apologises to Becca. Howie secretly befriends Gabby, a member of the therapy group. Becca and Howie have their first stand-up row. Jason appears at the house with a comic book he's made, which depicts alternative universes for an imagined family; Howie explodes in anger. Becca visits Jason's house; seeing that he's leaving for a prom, she waits all night. Howie visits Gabby's house but turns back, realising his mistake.

Back home, Howie awakes to find Becca in the kitchen. In the dawn light, they come to a silent understanding. Later, at a family gathering, Becca and Howie resign themselves to observing the social niceties.

Road to Las Vegas

United Kingdom 2010

Director: Jason Mazzot

British documentary-maker Jason Mazzot set out in 2005 to explore the attraction of Las Vegas for the 200 people who arrive there each day to make a new start. What he ended up with four years later was not only a portrait of one doggedly hopeful African-American family but also an accidental snapshot of the US buckling under the weight of the recession. As *Road to Las Vegas* starts, Vanessa and Maurice have left their home in Anchorage, Alaska, on God's say-so: He told Vanessa in a dream to hit the road. So seriously does she take His advice that she later blames a spell of bad luck on the fact that she acquiesced to Maurice's request to visit his folks rather than heading straight to Vegas.

But Vanessa is no sap. It is her indomitable will that unites her large family – she and Maurice have ten children between them, the five youngest of whom accompany them to Vegas – and keeps them surging forwards long after their optimism should have dwindled to nought. For most people, sleeping seven (plus dog) in a rented car parked next to an airport runway and scraping by on small change won in a casino would represent the bottom of the barrel. Vanessa, though, rarely falters; this makes it all the more cataclysmic when she says, "I kinda think God's let me down," following a particularly grisly bust-up with Maurice after he returns to his old crack-smoking ways.

Road to Las Vegas could be seen as a rise-and-fall story, with the family progressing from initial destitution through a year of relative comfort when Vanessa lands a job, only for problems both internal (drugs, infidelity) and external (bereavement, the economy) to thwart them again. Except that the

SYNOPSIS A documentary spanning four years in the life of one American family. In 2005, Vanessa has a dream in which God tells her to move from Anchorage, Alaska, to Las Vegas. With her husband Maurice and the youngest five of the ten children they have between them, she does just that. The family sleep in a rented car. Maurice tries to find work.

In 2006, the film returns to Vanessa, who now has a job and a house. After a violent argument over his drug habit, Maurice leaves. By 2007, the children have gone to live with Vanessa's oldest daughter, and Vanessa has moved in with her new partner, who proposes marriage. But in 2008, Vanessa and Maurice are back together, along with three of their children. Vanessa has lost her job and house in the recession. After the funeral of Maurice's brother, Vanessa and Maurice embrace, hopeful for the future.

evenness of temperament in Vanessa and her children, mirrored in Maurice's own watchful but unexcitable direction, confounds this reading. Vertiginous drops and hairpin bends in their lives barely rattle them; Glenn Jones's acoustic guitar, which makes some detours late in the day into Ry Cooder/*Paris, Texas* bottleneck territory, plays its part in levelling out the peaks and troughs. The score also fits nicely with the many driving shots. The camera gazes out at passing motels and mighty mountain ranges, conveying the allure of the open road, which inspires seven million Americans a year to up sticks and scram.

The picture's resistance to melodrama in the face of so many opportunities is even more impressive given that Mazzot has spoken of almost being attacked during shooting, once by a junkie in downtown Las Vegas and on another occasion by Maurice (who, high on crack, had taken him for Vanessa's lover). A sensationalist director would have left those lip-smackers in the film, but Mazzot – never seen and rarely heard – keeps the material on an even keel and trusts that the details will speak for themselves. They do. Whether it's Maurice, fresh out of prison for the third time during the four-year shoot, clinging to the perimeter fence around the runway as a symbol of happier times, or the family dog sniffing out \$17 at the kerbside, or Vanessa tugging a Caesars Palace baseball cap over her eyes as the recession bites, Mazzot compiles a tender record of faith in the face of poverty. His *Road to Las Vegas* is paved with good intentions.

Ryan Gilbey

CREDITS

Directed by

Jason Mazzot

Producers

Teddy Leifer

Jason Mazzot

Filmed by

Jason Mazzot

Editor

Alan Mackay

Music

Glenn Jones

©RISE Films Limited

and Jason Mazzot

Production Companies

More 4, RISE Films,

Borderline Films

Executive Producer

Sandra Whipham

Associate Producer

Joanna Pocock

Production Accountant

Matt Jones

Soundtrack

"David and the Phoenix",

"The Doll Hospital"

"This Is the Wind That

Blows It Out"

"Heartbreak Hill"

"Cady", "Friday Nights

With", "Sphinx unto

"Curious Men",

"Freedom Raga", "The

"Teething Necklace (For

John Fahey)" by Glenn

Jones – Glenn Jones

Dubbing Mixer

Matt Skilton

Sound Editors

Andy Hodges

Ross Millership

CREDITS

Directed by

Malcolm Melton

Producers

Zeke Melton

on-screen participants

Bernice Mikes

Vanessa's mother

Les

Maurice's friend

Darren

Vanessa's friend

Shelana

Vanessa's eldest

daughter

Andy

Vanessa's new

boyfriend

Vegas Mike

on-screen participant

Lloyd Melton

Maurice's brother

Ruby Moore

Maurice & Lloyd's

mother

In Colour

[1.78:1]

Distributor

ICA Cinema

Opening title cards read

Road to Las Vegas

A Story of Love and

Family

In the Years of Boom

and Bust

WITH

Maurice Melton

Vanessa Melton

Marcel Melton

Maurice Melton Jr

Midwinter Sale

Quote: MIDWINTER for 10% off all items



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The Scar Crow

United Kingdom 2009

Directors: Andy Thompson, Pete Benson

With Anna Tolputt, Marysia Kay, Kevyn Connell, Tim Major

Certificate 18 83m 32s

Opening in a 17th-century setting with a well-staged period witch-swimming and hanging in the woods and three sexily weird sisters dominated by a treacherous patriarch, Pete Benson and Andy Thompson's modest homegrown essay in the scarecrow-slasher subgenre (cf. *Scarecrows*, *Kakashi, Night of the Scarecrow*, *Scarecrow Gone Wild*, *Scarecrow Slayer*, *Messengers 2: The Scarecrow*) has a pleasant throwback feel that evokes 1970s items such as Piers Haggard's *Blood on Satan's Claw* or José Larraz's *Vampyres*. However, it soon develops into a scrappy present-day story that's more in line with the current trend for Brit-blokey horrors (*Severance*, *Doghouse*, *The Cottage*, *StagKnight*, *Small Town Folk*, *Lesbian Vampire Killers*), as white-collar lads bunking off from a team-building exercise are beguiled by the witch sisters. In the local pub, exposition is delivered Hammer Films-style by nattering peasants the visitors unwisely ignore, and back at the farm things take a sexploitation turn as the older girls go to work on keeping the boys around in order to harvest various body parts.

After a long build-up, mostly ominous atmosphere and all-too-credible city-lout behaviour, the film jumps into 1980s gore-mongery as the first victim drunkenly staggers into a field to take a leak against a scarecrow and suffers a shock amputation in the manner of the unwary hiker in the Bigfoot 'video nasty' *Night of the Demon* (1980). With the supporting victims swiftly mangled, narrator Daz and his out-of-control friend Tonk carry the film: Daz is the go-along guy who draws a line, like Michael J. Fox in *Casualties of War* (1989), and breaks his best mate's nose to stop him raping the youngest girl. But Tim Major's performance as a drunken horndog capable of terrible things without really meaning them is much more interesting than Kevyn Connell's wavy hero. Tonk also has a nice narrative shortcut moment as he tumbles that the seemingly innocent women are part of the horrors engulfing

him, and swiftly sees the sensible course of action with, "Oh shit, they're on it, let's leave."

Marysia Kay, Anna Tolputt and Gabrielle Douglas are fun, enunciating arch period dialogue and smouldering like vintage spook starlets, or being alarmingly domestic as the menfolk go into panic mode – though there's a dissociation between the early scenes, which are grimly realistic in the depiction of a family of women dominated by a hypocritical rapist, and the more genially exploitative sex-and-gore business.  Kim Newman

CREDITS

Directed by Andy Thompson

Pete Benson

Produced by Andy Thompson

Written by Andy Thompson

Pete Benson

Director of Photography Trevor Speed

Editors Jake Proctor

Andy Thompson

Production Designer Melanie Light

Musical Score/Music Soundtrack

Performed by Jon Samworth

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Production Companies

Dead On Arrival Digital presents a Gaia Media production

Associate Producers

Melissa Waudby

Crawford Anderson-Dillon

Hub Media

Paul Atherton

Production Managers

Melissa Waudby

Tim Major

Assistant Directors

1st: Iain Rogerson

Special Effects

Mike Peel

Costume Designer

Nell Knudsen

Hair/Make-up Design

Sam Maxwell

Hair/Make-up

Katie Fine

Liz Hayes

Piano Solo

Fiona Moran

Sound Design

Stephen W. Taylor

Sound Recordist

Matt Kemp

Sound Mix

Stephen W. Taylor

CAST

Anna Tolputt

Primrose, 'Prim'

Marysia Kay

Vanessa

SYNOPSIS Rural England, the 17th century. Elizabeth Tanner is hanged as a witch because her husband has informed against her in order to have unrestrained sexual access to their three daughters. Vanessa and Proper, the older sisters, prevent Tanner from raping Primrose, the youngest girl, by fatally injuring him and using their mother's witch books to turn him into an undead scarecrow. He inflicts a counter curse on the three women, however, confining them to the farm forever.

In the present day, Daz wakes up from a nightmare and tells his fiancée Rachel about the events that led to his troubled sleep. Earlier, Daz and his work friends Tonk, Joe and Nigel were on an orienteering course in the countryside as part of a team-building exercise, and happened on the Tanner sisters' farm. In an attempt to lift the curses, the witch women lure the young men to their cottage; their scarecrow father murders Joe, Nigel and Tonk so that their body parts can be recycled to create a composite scarecrow to replace Tanner.

When Daz finishes his story, Rachel turns into a scarecrow and attacks him; his head ends up on the composite in the field.

A Serbian Film

Serbia 2010

Director: Srdan Spasojevic

With Srdan Todorovic, Sergej Trifunovic, Jelena Gavrilovic

Certificate 18 99m 25s

Rivalling *The Human Centipede* as 2010's most notorious release, Srdan Spasojevic's debut arrives in Britain minus four minutes, shorn by the British Board of Film Classification on the official grounds of sexual violence, sexualised violence and the portrayal of children in a sexualised/abusive context. Although Spasojevic's blocking and cutting emphasise the fact that his child actors were filmed separately (so the uncut film might well evade prosecution under the normally draconian 1978 Protection of Children Act), it isn't hard to see why the BBFC played safe. It's not just the scenes with children that proved problematic: a quarter of the excised footage featured a woman deliberately asphyxiated by her rapist's penis.

That should ensure that most people will give *A Serbian Film* the widest possible berth: even the UK release is pretty strong meat. Stronger in some respects: its most notorious scene, originally incorporating a distinctly fake-looking baby (apparently born without umbilical cord or placenta) is arguably harder to take when greater reliance is placed on the viewer's imagination. At base, the film is a blatant piece of hucksterism, following marketing guidelines devised by its pornographer character Vukmir (Sergej Trifunovic) in cynically exploiting Serbia's demonisation. Not since *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* has a title's geographical location proved so potent: *A Swiss Film*, *A Norwegian Film* or even (tellingly) *A Croatian Film* would have far less impact.

However, it's technically accomplished out of all proportion to its tiny budget, and has plenty of ideas, even if they take a back seat once the second half's atrocity exhibition gets going. Inspired by the pornography it lampoons, the film's central narrative could hardly be simpler: retired porn star Milos (Srdan Todorovic, an Emir Kusturica regular) is lured back to his



Porn to be wild: Srdan Todorovic

old profession by the promise of a whopping fee and an opportunity to push back the boundaries of art. However, the charming, saturnine Vukmir is keener on creating politicised snuff videos, with Milos kept docile (except where it counts) via a drug cocktail including cattle aphrodisiac.

An initially confrontational but gradually abandoned exploration of the debilitating effects of pornography on participants and consumers (the opening scene features Milos' young son Petar illicitly sampling his father's back catalogue) becomes an attempt at special pleading, with Vukmir complaining about Serbia's pariah status while producing highly specialised (and explicitly 'Serbian') porn for export. Presumably keen to avoid similar charges of hypocrisy, Spasojevic and co-screenwriter Aleksandar Radivojevic have repeatedly stressed their film's allegorical side (according to them, Serbia was collectively hypnotised and drugged by government Vukmirs), but it sheds less light on the national psyche than many recent Serbian films, whether genre efforts such as Dejan Zecevic's amnesiac killer-thriller *The Fourth Man* (2007) or Mladen Djordjevic's similarly taboo-busting but more overtly satirical *The Life and Death of a Porno Gang* (2009).

Where *A Serbian Film* undoubtedly does work (even in the BBFC cut) is as a straight-down-the-line horror film,

SYNOPSIS Serbia, the present. Retired porn star Milos has settled down with translator Marija and young son Petar, but reluctantly returns to the business after former co-star Lejla tells him that an acquaintance, Vukmir, will pay handsomely for Milos' sexual talents. Vukmir claims to have created a new kind of pornography, but refuses to elaborate.

Milos is directed via earpiece to perform in a series of sexual situations that he finds increasingly disturbing, thanks to the high level of violence and the presence of teenage Jeca, the daughter of a Serbian war hero. His policeman brother Marko discovers that Vukmir is a former child psychologist. Milos tries to break his contract; Vukmir shows him footage of a bodyguard raping a newborn baby. Milos leaves in disgust and collapses shortly afterwards, waking up three days later covered in bruises and dried blood. He returns to the now abandoned film location and discovers videotapes recording atrocities committed both by himself (beating and beheading Jeca's mother) and others (Lejla being suffocated). It transpires that Milos was taken then to a warehouse and ordered to rape one of two shrouded bodies, while a masked man did the same to the other. After discovering that they were Petar and Marija, and that the masked man was Marko, Milos killed Vukmir and his bodyguards while Marija killed Marko.

Milos returns home and kills his family (including himself) with a single bullet. A wealthy businessman arrives with a camera crew and orders his bodyguard to start violating the corpses.

staging its set pieces with sufficient flair and variety to retain attention, albeit frequently of the appalled fascination kind. Vukmir's climactic unveiling of 'the perfect Serbian family' in the form of a single incestuous tableau is too pat to have the intended emotional impact, although the film's actual ending, proposing that Vukmir is far from alone and that death offers no escape, is effectively nihilistic. But perhaps the most telling self-criticism comes at the start, when Milos' wife Marija describes his work as "cartoon films for grown-ups", an impression that's hard to shake when subsequently confronted by her naked, priapic husband roaring like a bull after despatching a one-eyed henchman with the aid of the hardest weapon immediately to hand.

♦ Michael Brooke

CREDITS

Director Srdan Spasojevic
Producer Srdan Spasojevic
Screenplay Aleksandar Radivojevic
 Srdan Spasojevic
Director of Photography Nemanja Jovanov
Editor Darko Simic
Production Designers Nemanja Petrovic
 Ivana Protic
Music Sky Wikluh

© [none]
Production Company Contrafilm presents a film by Srdan Spasojevic

Executive Producer Dragoljub Vojnov
Unit Production Manager Nikola Pantelic
Production Manager Natasa Milojevic
Post-production Supervisor Nikola Pantelic
Assistant Directors Miroslav Stamatov
 Working with Children: Jasmin Cvicic

Camera Operators A: Pablo Ferro Zivanovic
 B: Bojan Brbora
Steadicam Operators Miroslav Kaderko
 Nebojsa Ovuka
Gaffer Dragana Tenjovic
Graphics Art Director Kosta Rakic
Scenic Props Aleksandar Putic
Props Dejan Stojiljkovic
 Mlrorad Kalarj
Costume Designer Jasmina Sanader
Make-up Dubravka Busatilja
Special Make-up Effects Miroslav Lakobrja
 Nenad Gajic
Title Animation Marko Katanic
Soundtrack "Zeko i potocic" – Jelena Gavrilovic
Sound Design Aleksandar Protic
Sound Recordists Milos Drobajkovic
 Dore Durovic
Sound Mixer Aleksandar Perisic
 Spasic
Stunt Co-ordinator Milica Popovic

CAST

Srdan Todorovic Milos
Sergej Trifunovic Vukmir
Jelena Gavrilovic Marija
Katarina Zutic Lejla
Slobodan Bestic Marko
Ana Sakic Jeca's mother
Lena Bogdanovic doctor
Luka Mijatovic Stefan
Angela Nenadovic Jeca
Nenad Herakovic guard 1
Miodrag Krcmarik Rasa
Carni Deric guard 2
Lidija Pleti Jeca's grandmother
Tanja Divnic nursery school teacher
Marina Savic prostitute
Natasa Miljus woman in labour
Marta Milosavljevic 'sponzorusa', kept woman
Uros Jankovic idler 1
Goran Macura idler 2
Milena Zugic girl in pool 1
Mila Milosevic girl in pool 2
Miroslav Sencanski film director
Ivan Cvetic
Milos Vrbica bodyguards
Marjjeta Goc girl in bad porno film 1
Biljana Zurnic girl in bad porno film 2
Dragana Jovanovic butcher
Irena Korac cashier
Dejan Bozovic waiter
Sanja Spasojevic
Aleksandar Banjac young couple

In Colour [2.35:1]
Subtitles
Distributor Revolver Entertainment
8,947 ft +8 frames (cuts of 4m 11s. For some cuts, other material was substituted.)
Serbian theatrical title Srpski Film

Tangled

USA 2010

Directors: Nathan Greno, Byron Howard
Voices of Mandy Moore, Zachary Levi, Donna Murphy, Ron Perlman

Disney returns to a classic fairytale for its 50th animated feature, the story of long-haired Rapunzel. Few elements of the Brothers Grimm version remain: Rapunzel is now a princess, captured by Mother Gothel (no mention of the word 'witch'). Rather than being under the spell of an enchantress, Rapunzel is the one with the supernatural power: Gothel relies on her magic hair for eternal youth. Love-interest Flynn is no prince but a thief – and one who's going to need a royal pardon.

While physically capable of escaping, this Rapunzel is a prisoner through fear and emotional blackmail: a sheltered, self-educated teen torn between devotion to her mother and adventure/romance. In order to gain independence, she must cut the apron strings – and her hair. Her unfeasibly long blonde mane is a symbol of her imaginative but impractical youth. It twists and turns playfully around her castle room but becomes more restrained as she experiences the world: she bundles it up, then ties it in a plait. Cutting it off will mark her arrival into adulthood, and release her from her prison. The power Gothel guards so jealously will be gone.

Initially an ambiguous character, Gothel frequently snaps in annoyance at Rapunzel before reassuring her that she's "only joking" and loves her deeply. Is she a loving but flawed adoptive mother who's selfish and vain, or simply a ruthless manipulator? It's a more sinister prospect than a clear-cut villain such as Cinderella's wicked stepmother. To Rapunzel, Gothel is more like the Wolf in 'Little Red Riding Hood': an apparently loving relative who will be unmasked as a predator.

Visually, directors Nathan Greno and Byron Howard (*Bolt*) have acknowledged their debt to Disney features from the 1940s and 1950s, housing their characters in classic fairytale palaces and affecting a painted style more commonly seen in older animations. They use 3D efficiently without resorting to gimmickry, saving the

SYNOPSIS A magic flower was once discovered by an old woman, Gothel, who became young every time she sang to it. In a nearby kingdom, the pregnant queen fell ill and was cured by the flower; her daughter Rapunzel was born with the same power in her hair. Gothel kidnapped Rapunzel, raising the child as her own in an isolated tower, and singing to her hair for eternal youth.

Unaware of her true identity, Rapunzel is now about to turn 18. Her 'mother' forbids her to go outside their tower. Flynn, a thief, climbs up the tower while fleeing palace guards. Rapunzel knocks him out and hides the crown he has stolen. She will return it when he guides her to the kingdom to see the floating lanterns that appear each year on her birthday – a tribute to the missing princess.

On the way to the kingdom Flynn and Rapunzel meet pub locals and befriend a horse called Maximus. Rapunzel is secretly approached by Gothel, who has followed them. Gothel gives Rapunzel the crown to test Flynn's loyalty. Rapunzel gives the crown to him after watching the lanterns; he promises to return to her. Flynn gives the crown to former cohorts the Stabbington Brothers, now in league with Gothel. They strap him to a palace-bound boat with the crown. Gothel takes Rapunzel home, telling her that Flynn has traded her for the crown.

Maximus and the pub locals break Flynn out of prison. When Flynn arrives at the tower, Gothel stabs him. He cuts Rapunzel's hair short, reversing Gothel's rejuvenation. Gothel falls out of the window. Rapunzel's teardrop heals Flynn. Reunited with her parents, Rapunzel marries Flynn.

full impact for an emotive scene in which lanterns float through the sky and into the vision of the audience. This scene delivers an emotional punch, as does the climactic moment of self-sacrifice and redemption.

Animal sidekicks (a chameleon and a horse) stoke up visual humour effectively and occasionally inventively, but *Tangled* still lacks the laugh count of Pixar and DreamWorks counterparts such as the *Toy Story* and *Shrek* series. Musical numbers are well voiced but largely saccharine, with the exception of Gothel's 'Mother Knows Best', which combines a Broadway feel with lyrics of a darker intent ("Skip the drama, stay with Mamma..." she trills, trying to frighten Rapunzel away from the outside world).

Mixing fairytale plotting with strong female characters and modern dialogue, *Tangled* is a fairly typical contemporary Disney outing. It's not as epic as *The Lion King* (1994) but it has character, imagination and heart, as well as hair.

♦ Anna Smith

CREDITS

Directed by Nathan Greno, Byron Howard
Produced by Roy Conli
Screenplay Dan Fogelman
Edited by Tim Mertens
Production Designer Douglas Rogers
Original Score Composed by/Original Songs Produced by Alan Menken
Original Songs

Music by:
 Alan Menken
Lyrics by:
 Glenn Slater

©Disney Enterprises, Inc.
Production Company Walt Disney Pictures presents
Executive Produced by John Lasseter, Glen Keane
Associate Producer Aimee Scribner
Production Manager Doen Welch Greiner
Production Supervisors Jennifer Christine Vera, Tim Pauer
Production Finance Lead Belinda M. Hsu

Post-production Supervisor Brent W. Hall
Casting Jamie Sparer Roberts
Story Head of Story: Mark Kennedy
 Production Department Manager: Debra Barlow
 Story Artists: Michael Labash, Joe Mateo, Arian Redson, John Ripa, Marc Smith, Lissa Treiman, Josie Trinidad, Chris Ure

Additional Story Artists:
 Stephen Anderson, Paul Briggs, Dean Wellins, Chris Williams

Animation Animation Supervisors: Glen Keane, John Kahrs, Clay Kaytis
 Supervising Animators: Lino Di Salvo, Mark Mitchell
 Production Department Manager: Nicole P. Hearon

Animators: Jason Anastas, Doug Bennett, Patrick Bonneau, Joe Bowers, Jamaal Bradley, Rebecca Wilson Bresee, Darren Butters, Tony Cabrera, Youngjae Choi, Jeremy Collins, Christopher Cordingly, Bob Davies, Claudio de Oliveira, Renato Dos Anjos, Adam Dykstra, Chadd Ferron, Jason Figliozzi, Danny Galleote, Dave Gottlieb, Adam Green, Jennifer Hager, Brent Homann, Darrell Johnson, Alex Kupershmidt, Kira Lehtomaki, Christopher Dennis, Lindsay, Sam Marin, Alexander Mark, Marlon Nowe, Patrick Osborne, Hyrum Virl Osmond, Zach 'Lazer' Parrish, Claus N. Pedersen, Daniel Martin Peix, Malcon B. Pierce III, Nik Ranieri, Joel Reid, Katie Cheang Rice, Henry Sanchez, Joe Sandstrom, Alli Sadegiani, Chad Sellers, Yuriko Senoo, Amy Lawson Smeed, Tony Smeed, Ron Smith, Michael Surrey, Wayne Unten, John Wong, Animation TD: Ricky Rieckenberg

Effects Effects Supervisor: Michael Kaschak, Acting Production Department Manager: Mike Huang, Effects Animators: Brett Boggs, Ian J. Coony, Peter Demund, David Hutchins, Kevin K. Lee, Dale Mayeda

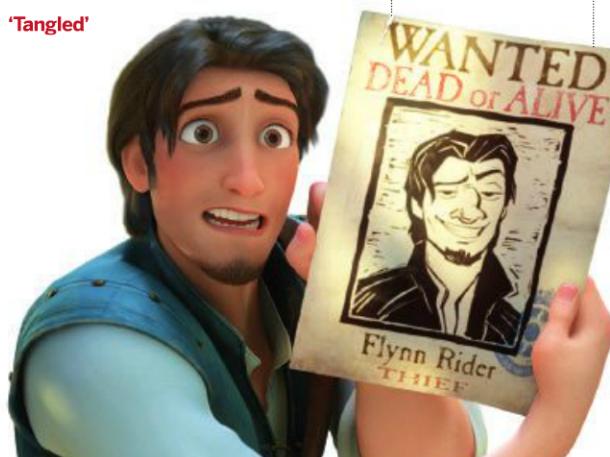
Lighting Lighting Supervisors: Alessandro Jacomini, Andrew Selle
Visual Effects Supervisor Steve Goldberg
Lighting Lighting Supervisors: Alessandro Jacomini, Brian Leach, Richard E. Lehmann, Robert L. Miles, Ernest J. Petti, Chris Springfield, Josh Staub, Technical Lighting Supervisor: Thaddeus P. Miller

Simulation Team Simulation Supervisor: Ximmin Zhao, Hair Process Lead: Sean D. Jenkins, Hair Animation Lead: Eric Daniels, Character TDs/Hair: Brian Huffman, William D. Kastak, Avneet Kaur, Hubert Leo, Robert Rosenblum, Amy Shimano, Arun Somasundaram, Hidetaka Yosumi, Character TDs/Cloth: Jay Banks, Craig Caton-Largent, Jeff MacNeill, Timmy Tompkins, General TDs: Fabrice Ceugniet, Christopher Otto, Gallagher

Layout Layout Supervisor: Scott Beattie, Production Department Managers: Collin Larkins, Karen Ryan, Layout Artist/Camera Polish: Cory Rocco Florimonte, Layout Artists: Allen Blaisdell, Rob Dressel, Todd Allen Erickson, Daniel Hu, Brian Kesinger, Terry Moews, Rick Moore, John Murrah, Christopher K. Poplin, Merrick Rustia, Wally Schaab, Richard Turner, David Wainstain, Doug Walker, Layout TD: Jeff Sadler

Stereoscopic Supervisor Robert Neuman, **Editorial** Production Department

'Tangled'



Manager: Yvette Merino
 Associate Editor: Shannon Stein
Art Director David Goetz
Co-art Director Dan Cooper
Visual Development/Design
 Design: Mac George
 Kevin Nelson
 David Womersley
 Character Design: Kim Jin
 Glen Keane
 Shiyoon Kim
 Bill Schwab
 Visual Development
 Artists: Lauren Airiess
 Gustaf 'Goose' Asporen
 Laurent Ben-Mimoun
 Lorelay Bove
 Justin Crum
 Jim Finn
 Claire Keane
 Lisa Keene
 Kent Melton
 Craig Mullins
 Scott Watanabe
 Victoria Ying
 Additional Visual Development: Seth Engstrom
 Paul Felix
 Mike Gabriel
 Andy Harkness
 Bill Perkins
 Kyle Stratwitz
 Jeff Turley
 Raffaello Vecchione
Look Development
 Look/Lighting Director: Mohit Kallianpur
 Look Supervisors: Colin Eckart
 Heather Pritchett
 Look Development Lead: Chuck Tappan
 Look Development Artists: Sara Virginia Cembalista
 Charles Colladay
 Ryan Duncan
 John Hulku
 Hans-Joerg Keim
 David Kersey
 Kwon Ju Hee
 Vicki Yu-Tzu Lin
 Eric McLean
 Michelle Lee Robinson
 Leonard Robledo
 Mitchell Allen Snay
 Pamela Spertus
 Lance Summers
 Larry Wu
 Jeannie Yip
 Render Optimization Lead: Ramón Montoya
 Vozmediano
 Look Development TDS: Hank Driskill
 Andrew Kinney
 Tal Lancaster
 Adrienne Othon
 Lewis N. Siegel
 Nasheet Zaman
Modelling Supervisor Greg Martin
Model Development
 Production Department Manager: Audrey Ellen Geiger
 Modelers: Virgilio John Aquino
 Leo Sanchez Barbosa
 Yung-Lo Chang
 Hiroki Itokazu
 Yun Geuk Kang
 Eryn Katz
 Jon Krummel
 Joe Kwong
 David Mooy
 Samy Segura
 James E. Stapp
 Chad Spencer
 Stubblefield
 Joe Whyte
End Title Designer Mary Meacham Hogg
End Title Artist Shiyoon Kim
Music Conducted by Michael Kosarin
Songs Arranged/Orchestrated by Michael Starobin
Score Orchestrated by Kevin Klesch
Vocal Arrangements

Michael Kosarin
Music Supervisor Tom MacDougall
Original Score Produced by Alan Menken
 Kevin Klesch
Soundtrack
 "Incantation Song" – Donna Murphy, Mandy Moore; "When Will My Life Begin," "When Will My Life Begin Reprise" – Mandy Moore; "Mother Knows Best," "Mother Knows Best Reprises" – Donna Murphy; "I've Got a Dream" – Brad Garrett, Jeffrey Tambor, Mandy Moore, Zachary Levi, Ensemble; "I See the Light" – Mandy Moore, Zachary Levi;
 "Something That I Want" – Grace Potter
Sound Designer Cameron Frankley
Original Dialogue Mixers
 Gabriel Guy
 Doc Kane
 Bill Higley
 Roy Latham
Re-recording Mixers
 David E. Flahr
 Dean Zupancic

VOICE CAST

Mandy Moore Rapunzel
Zachary Levi Flynn Rider
Donna Murphy Mother Gothel
Ron Perlman Stabbington brother
M.C. Gainey Captain of the Guard
Jeffrey Tambor big nose thug
Brad Garrett hook hand thug
Paul F. Tompkins short thug
Richard Kiel Vlad
Delaney Rose Stein young Rapunzel/little girl
Nathan Greno guard 1/thug 1
Byron Howard guard 2/thug 2
Tim Mertens guard 3
Michael Bell
Bob Bergen
Susanne Blakeslee
Jane Christopher
Roy Conli
David Cowgill
Terri Douglas
Chad Einbinder
Pat Fraley
Eddie Frierson
Jackie Gonneau
Nicholas Guest
Bridget Hoffman
Daniel Kaz
Anne Lockhart
Mona Marshall
Scott Menville
Laraine Newman
Paul Pape
Lynwood Robinson
Fred Tatasciore
Hynden Walch
Kari Wahlgren
 additional voices

Dolby Digital/SDDS
In Colour
US prints by DeLuxe
International prints by Technicolor
[1.85:1]
3D

Distributor Buena Vista International (UK)

The Tourist

USA/France 2010

Director: Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck
With Angelina Jolie, Johnny Depp, Paul Bettany, Timothy Dalton
Certificate 12A 102m 58s

Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck's second film following 2006's *The Lives of Others* is at first sight a surprise, and not a particularly welcome one to judge by its overwhelmingly negative critical response. It's a big-budget star vehicle for Johnny Depp and Angelina Jolie (together on screen for the first time), a tongue-in-cheek romantic-comedy thriller-caper of the 'wrong man' variety. It's Pink Panther-silly and partially formed Hitchcockian, but not without its enjoyable moments; there are a few funny lines, and even the abysmally directed and edited action scenes have a certain old-fashioned charm, the result perhaps of an admirable refusal to conform to Hollywood hyper-adrenalised norms *pace* Bourne.

It's a remake of *Anthony Zimmer* (2005), co-scripted by the director with heavyweights Julian Fellowes and Christopher McQuarrie, in which Depp's bumbling maths teacher and titular tourist is mistaken for super-thief Alexander Pearce, wanted by Scotland Yard for tax avoidance, and by Steven Berkoff's repellent gangster whom he swindled out of billions. Jolie is portrayed as a super-fetishised love-goddess who wavers romantically between her disappeared master-thief lover and Depp's more down-to-earth charms. In tone and mood there's an awkward attempt to recapture the lightness and romantic insouciance of a film like *To Catch a Thief* (1955).

We're clearly a long way from the horrors of East Germany in the early 1980s, but the biggest surprise is the congruences between this and the earlier film. The paraphernalia of spying is present once again, mistrust of which spills over into a mistrust of appearances *per se* – St Exupery's "What is essential is invisible to the eye" could easily be the motto of *The Tourist* (and there's a reassuring message for celebrities bent on remodelling their appearance through plastic surgery). As in the earlier film, love is a disruptive force, jolting characters out of professional codes of conduct. Jolie's character is in some odd way an



What have I done to deserve this?: Angelina Jolie, Johnny Depp

equivalent of Ulrich Mühe's Stasi officer in the previous film (with Paul Bettany's obsessive, uncomprehending policeman a minor variant).

All of which perhaps justifies the proud announcement "A Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck film" in the credits, suggesting an auteur working through a set of abiding preoccupations. The film's main motif, the two-faced Roman god Janus, as worn on a bracelet by Jolie, is explained by her character as a reminder to accept people's good and bad sides; which neatly points up the cosy humanism common to both von Donnersmarck films.

The problem is that the bad tends to get elided in favour of audience-friendly redemptiveness and, in the first film's case, a too tidy and superficial (and ultimately unrecognisable) version of history. At least that kind of incoherence or avoidance matters less in fluff like *The Tourist*; the Pearce character pays back the taxes he owes at the end, thereby having his criminal status revoked, and he only stole the remaining billions from a psychopath anyway (but why was such a supposed nice guy hanging out with him in the first place?). For all the nods to Janus-faced complexity, these are moral universes very clearly and reassuringly delineated. It transpires, in a less than subtle twist at the end, that there are two tourists in the film, but in fact there's a third, von Donnersmarck himself, a seeming dilettante with a sketchy grasp of the worlds he takes residence in, and possessed of a frustrating unwillingness to follow through on the implications of his material. **♦ Kieron Corless**

SYNOPSIS Paris, the present. The police are trailing Elise, who'll lead them to her lover Alexander Pearce, wanted for tax avoidance. Pearce is also being pursued by a gangster, Shaw, from whom he stole billions. Elise hears from Pearce – she must board a train to Venice and attach herself to someone of similar physical stature to himself. She chooses Frank, a maths teacher, but the police are not fooled. Elise takes Frank to her hotel in Venice; he sleeps in a separate room, despite their mutual attraction. The next morning Elise has gone, but Shaw's men capture Frank. Elise rescues him and they elude their pursuers. Elise receives a note from Pearce telling her to attend a ball that night, and disappears. It transpires she is an undercover officer who was tailing Pearce but fell for him - she is now ready to hand Pearce over. At the ball, Elise dismisses Frank. A note from Pearce leads her to a nearby villa, where Shaw captures her. The police capture Frank, and they watch the scene in the villa on cameras. Shaw tells her to open the safe, where he believes his money is kept. Frank escapes and enters the villa; he tells Shaw he is Pearce, post-facial surgery. Pearce opens the safe. Shaw is killed by the police. Pearce and Elise escape together. Pearce leaves a cheque covering his tax debt.

CREDITS

Directed by Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck
Produced by Graham King
 Tim Headington
 Roger Birnbaum
 Gary Barber
 Jonathan Glickman
Screenplay Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck
 Christopher McQuarrie
 Julian Fellowes
 Based upon the motion picture *Anthony Zimmer* written and directed by Jérôme Salle and produced by Fidélité SAS and Alter Films, SA
Director of Photography John Seale
Edited by Joe Hustling
 Patricia Rommel
Production Designer Jon Hutman
Music James Newton Howard

©GK Films, LLC
Production Companies GK Films, Columbia Pictures present in association with Spyglass Entertainment a GK Films production A Birnbaum/Barber production In association with StudioCanal A Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck film Produced with the assistance of the Italian tax credit provided for by law no. 244 of 24 December 2007 Filmed with the assistance of the French Tax Rebate for International Productions

Production Services Italy: Cineroma S.r.l.
 France: Peninsula Film
Executive Producers Lloyd Phillips
 Bahman Naraghi
 Olivier Courson
 Ron Halpern
Co-producers Denis O'Sullivan
 Jeffrey Nachmanoff
Line Producers Italy: David Nichols
 France: John Bernard
Unit Production Manager Lloyd Phillips
Supervising Production Manager Gregor Wilson
Production Managers Francesco Marras
 Paris Unit: Gilles Castera

Production Co-ordinators Claudia Cimmino
 Paris Unit: Agnès Berméjó Lainé
Production Controller April Janow
Supervising Location Manager Fabrizio Cerato
Location Managers Anna Maria Rocca
 Train: Leonardo Semplici
 Paris Unit: Arnaud Kaiser
Post-production Supervisor Lisa Rodgers
Assistant Directors 1st: Steve E. Andrews
 Key 2nd: Jonny Benson
Italy: 1st: Alberto Mangiante
 2nd: Barbara Pastovich
Paris Unit: 1st: Gillies Kenny
 2nd: Mathilde Cavillan
Script Supervisor Dianne Dreyer
Casting Susie Figgis
Italy: Beatrice Krüger
 Alberto Mangiante
France: Stéphane Foenkinos
Aerial Director of Photography John Marzano
Camera Operators B: Daniele Massaccesi
 C: Marco Sacerdoti
 C: Emiliano Lurini
Steadicam Operator Daniele Massaccesi
Gaffers Morris Flam
 Stefano Marino
 Paris Unit: Jean-François Drigeard Desgarnie
Key Grips Tommaso Mele
 Paris Unit: Cyril Kuhnholtz
Visual Effects Supervisor: Ted Rae
 Producer: Tom Ford
Visual Effects by Peerless Camera Company, London
 Filmworks / FX, Inc.
 Zen Haven Studios, Inc.
 VFX Collective, Inc.
 At the Post, Inc.
Special Effects Supervisor Dominic Tuohy
Minatures New Deal Studios, Inc.
Supervising Art Director Marco Trentini
Art Directors Susanna Codognato
 Paris Unit: Stéphane Cressend
Set Designer Antonio Tarolla

Set Decorators
 Anna Pinnock
 Paris Unit:
 Emmanuel Délis
Property Masters
 Brad Torbett
 Italy:
 Antonio Fraulo
 Paris Unit:
 Olivier Crespin
Construction Manager
 Claudio Magrini
Costume Designer
 Colleen Atwood
Costume Supervisors
 Suzi Turnbull
 Paris Unit:
 Laurence Tallon Caines
Wardrobe Supervisor
 Catherine Buyle
Key Make-up Artist
 Maurizio Silvi
Key Make-up
 Paris Unit:
 Françoise Quilichini
Hair Designer
 Italy:
 Giorgio Gregorini
Key Hair Stylist
 Paris Unit:
 Frédérique Arguello
Main Title Sequence
 Imaginary Forces
Main Title Designers:
 Ahmet Ahmet
 Joan Lau
End Crawl
 Scarlet Letters
Orchestra Conductor
 Pete Anthony
Orchestrators
 Pete Anthony
 Conrad Pope
 Jeff Atmajian
 Jon Kull
 John Ashton Thomas
Soundtrack
 "Cat's Pyjamas"; "No Fear of Heights" – Katie Melua; "Dance in F" by Gabriel Yared; "Starlight" – Muse
Sound Design
 Mel Wesson
 Ryeland Allison
Sound Mixers
 Mark Ulano
 Paris Unit:
 Michel Kharat
Re-recording Mixers
 Scott Millan
 David Parker
Supervising Sound
Editors
 Wylie Stateman
 Renée Tondelli
Stunt Co-ordinator
 Simon Crane
Stunt Co-coordinator
 Wade Eastwood

CAST

Angelina Jolie
 Elise Clifton-Ward
Johnny Depp
 Frank Tupelo
Paul Bettany
 Inspector John Acheson
Timothy Dalton
 Chief Inspector Jones
Steven Berkoff
 Reginald Shaw
Rufus Sewell
 the Englishman
Christian De Sica
 Colonnello Lombardi
Alessio Boni
 Sergente Cerato
Raoul Bova
 Conte Filippo Gaggia
Daniele Pecci
 Tenente Narduzzi
Giovanni Guidelli
 Tenente Tommassini
Bruno Wolkowitch
 Capitaine Courson
Marc Ruchmann
 Brigadier Kaiser
Julien Baumgartner
 Brigadier Ricourt
François Vincentelli
 Brigadier Marion
Clément Sibony
 Brigadier Rousseau
Jean-Claude Adelin
 Brigadier Cavalier
Jean-Marie Lamour
 Jean-Michel, café waiter
Nicolas Guillot
 Jérôme, café head waiter
Mhammed Arezki
 Achmed Tchebali, courier

Igor Jijikine
 Virginsky
Vladimir Orlov
 Lebyadkin
Vladimir Televoski
 Liputin
Alec Utgoff
 Fedka
Mark Zak
 Shigaylov
Neri Marcoré
 Alessio, hotel concierge
Gabriele Gallinari
 Luca, hotel bell boy
Riccardo De Torrebruna
 Guido, hotel waiter
Maurizio Casagrande
 Antonio, waiter
Nino Frassica
 Brigadiere Mele
Gwilym Lee
 Mountain, senior technician
Steven Robertson
 Pinnock, junior technician
Iddo Goldberg
 Whitfield, Jones' assistant
Renato Scarpa
 Arturo the tailor
Giancarlo Prevati
 gala co-ordinator, Dalla Pieta
Giovanni Esposito
 Coppa, interpreter
Marino Narduzzi
 Stefano, Elise's driver
Tino Giada
 Mauro, Elise's driver
Bruno Bilotta
 Giordani, sniper chief
Ralf Moeller
 Lunt, jail bird
Davide Bernardi
 Enrico Bertolotti
Elena Biasi
 Emanuele Buzzi
Valdimiro Buzzi
 Valerio Cossu
Matteo De Anna
 Antonito Galligioni
Giacomo Grespan
 Antonito Iorio
Andrea Nocerino
 Lorenzo Parravicini
Filippo Pastore
 Giandomenico Pegoraro
Giulio Senolo
 Patrizio Shlude
Giancarlo Trimboli
 gala musicians
Roberta Mastromichele
Irma Di Paola
Massimiliano Belsito
Francesca Neri
Davide Cipolleschi
Francesco De Simone
Salvatore Dello Iacono
Antonio Fiore
Simone Sparaciari
Romina Carancini
Maria Teresa Corsi
Dalila Frassanito
Manuela Guastalli
Damiano Bisozzi
Jennifer Iacono
Claudia Mancinelli
Etienne Cacciari
Gianluca Frezzato
Iaria Cavola
Brooke Antonello
Kim Fasano
Jonathan Redavid
Marcello Sacchetta
Karin Dal Pezzo
Martina Fanton
Silvia Ormiciuolo
 dancers at gala

Dolby Digital/DTS/ SDDS
In Colour
 [2.35:1]

Distributor
 Optimum Releasing
9,267 ft +4 frames

Travellers

United Kingdom 2010
Director: Kris McManus
With Shane Sweeney, Tom Geoffrey, Alex Edwards, Celia Muir

While boxing of the modern, gloved sort has been a cinematic staple since the medium's invention (as chronicled in Dan Streible's outstanding study *Fight Pictures*), its bare-knuckle antecedent is, unsurprisingly, seldom glimpsed nowadays beyond the DVD market's shadier margins. The most notable recent exceptions are both courtesy of Guy Ritchie: his *Sherlock Holmes* (2009) re-imagined the cerebral sleuth as a *demi-monde* pugilist; and *Snatch* (2000), a larkishly raucous gangland fantasia, brought the word 'pikey' back into Britain's linguistic mainstream.

In the intervening decade, 'pikey' has become a controversial term, especially among those on the receiving end: members of itinerant communities variously known as Roma, Gypsies or simply Travellers. Indeed, the drama of *Travellers*, a scrappily low-budget debut from writer/director Kris McManus, is sparked when invective-spewing city-dweller Andy (Tom Geoffrey), holidaying with three friends, impulsively sprays a Travellers' caravan with the phrase 'pikey scum'. This sets in motion a chain of reprisals and counter-reprisals that quickly (and semi-accidentally) spirals into a rural bloodbath.

While this grimly downbeat film is, perhaps inevitably, more nuanced, even-handed and disturbing than the last notable British foray into such terrain, James Watkins's crass *Eden Lake* (2008), it is nevertheless an amateurishly uneven affair, aimed squarely at small-screen exposure. And though McManus punctuates proceedings with several messy slayings, there's far too much talky downtime to satisfy his sensation-hungry target demographic. Indeed, the bare-knuckle action is relegated, almost as an afterthought, to the final reel, via a protracted, chopily edited bout in which one of our hapless adventurers – Irish-accented Chris (Shane Sweeney), himself of Traveller ancestry – takes on hardened brawler Martin (Dean Jagger) for reasons the script never quite makes clear.

Chris's background ensures that he is by some way the most intriguing of the holidaymakers, but it's Jagger's Martin who makes the most forceful impact: initially presented as a two-dimensional thug, the furrow-browed bruiser emerges as a decent, fair-minded sort – encapsulating the film's (hardly groundbreaking) thesis that appearances can be deceptive, and that deeply entrenched social prejudices often yield dire consequences for all.

The most jaundiced of our nominal 'heroes' is baby-faced Territorial Army dropout Andy, slowly (and implausibly) revealed as far more lethal than any of the Travellers he demonises. It's a recapitulation of Wes Craven's thesis from *The Last House on the Left* (1972) and *The Hills Have Eyes* (1977), that 'civilised' urban folk are capable of just as much

SYNOPSIS England, the present. City-based friends Andy, Chris, John and Dan travel to the countryside for a motorbiking holiday. Camping in a field, they come across a caravan seemingly recently abandoned by travellers. Andy sprays the caravan with an abusive message and looks inside, spotting what appears to be the corpse of a young woman. When the caravan's occupants unexpectedly return, Andy, Chris and John flee into the nearby forest. Dan is knocked unconscious and tied up inside the caravan alongside the 'corpse' – in fact a traveller named Lucy, who had been sleeping off a wild night.

In the woods, John is disembowelled by an unseen assailant, while Andy and Chris are pursued by the travellers. Dan slowly befriends Lucy, whose brother Martin is preparing for a boxing bout later that night. In the forest, Andy becomes increasingly paranoid, killing one of the travellers in self-defence. Captured by the travellers, Chris is forced to participate in a bare-knuckle fight with Martin, who emerges victorious after a long, bloody contest. Returning to the caravan, Chris and the travellers are confronted by an unhinged Andy, who sets fire to the trailer before killing Lucy and another traveller, and shooting Martin. Martin recovers, strangling Andy as a traumatised Chris and Dan stumble away into the night.

Some time later, Dan discovers YouTube evidence that Chris has become immersed in the world of underground boxing.

savagery as their country cousins. McManus's main influence, however, is clearly John Boorman's enduringly seminal *Deliverance* (1972) – signalled by an awkward first-reel cameo from Boorman's son Charley as a gloowering saloon-bar philosopher quoting John Locke: "The dread of evil is a much more forcible principle of human actions than the prospect of good."

It's a contention that's duly illustrated by the grisly shenanigans which subsequently unfold, though any stabs at deeper significance are undone by the ostentatiously foul-mouthed dialogue ("He's as much use as a shit-flavoured fucking Tic Tac, but at the end of the day he's a mate"), excessively ragged handheld digital-video camerawork and editing that skirts incoherence at key junctures.

■ **Neil Young**

CREDITS

Directed by
 Kris McManus
Produced by
 Brian Levine
 Kris McManus
 Ben Richards
Written by
 Kris McManus
Director of Photography
 Kris McManus
Edited by
 Phil Eldridge
 Kris McManus
Music
 Adam Langston
 Dicken Marshall

© Travellers Film Limited
Production Companies

Animus Pictures,
 Delachery Films,
 Inroad Pictures in
 association with
 Spitfireboy Productions
 and V1 Media
 A Kris McManus film
 Altadena Films
Executive Producers
 Jon Barfoot
 Alex Edwards
 Thor Hayton
 Jonathan Vanderkar
Production Manager
 James Privett
Visual Effects
 Inroad Pictures
Make-up
 Stephen Byrne
Animated Titles
 V1 Media
Music Performed by
 Dicken Marshall

Darren Sellen
 cornerman
Jamie Careless
 car husband
Sarah Haskett
 car wife
Kevin Paddock
 pub patron 1
'Wild' Bill Besant
 pub patron 2
Mick Williams
 fight security 1
Jamie Gunner
 fight security 2
Dave MacRae
 rooftop fighter
Steven Humpherson
 rooftop fairplay man
Nick Fearn
 rooftop cornerman
Mark Thomas
 tattooed fighter
Ben Freeman
Andrew Squires
Mark Logan Benn
Krissy Moss
Rachael Sherwood
Gavin Ryan
Dan Munday
Georgina Rennie
Alexandra Jones
Steve Byrne
Dean Mainwaring
David Heaver
Lee Gilbert
Steven Hynes
Elizabeth London
Samill Choudrey
Simon Pyke
Connor Ryan
 fight crowd

In Colour
 [2.35:1]

Distributor
 High Fliers Distribution



Knuckling down to it: Dean Jagger, Shane Sweeney

Tron Legacy

USA 2010

Director: Joseph Kosinski

With Jeff Bridges, Garrett Hedlund, Olivia Wilde, Bruce Boxleitner

Certificate PG 125m 20s

With this expensive and much hyped sequel to the 28-year-old *Tron*, Disney seems to be banking on the nostalgia factor as well as the geek effect. For the first *Tron* has a cult mystique: rarely (if ever) taken seriously as a film, it was nevertheless a pioneer both technically and conceptually. In 1982 it envisioned cyberspace as an Oz for the Pac-Man generation, where *Flash Gordon*-style heroes in glowing leotards flung killer frisbees and duelled on super-motorbikes in a wireframe world. *Tron Legacy* is less a sequel than an upgrade, remaking many of the same sequences in ostentatiously spiffed-up form, a tactic familiar to gamers who follow the successive iterations of Mario or Sonic the Hedgehog.

The new film might have been better as a simple remake, with Jeff Bridges – the human hero in the first movie – as the conventional villain formerly played by David Warner. Instead, *Tron Legacy* resembles earnestly vapid fan-fiction. Unlike the original, the film rarely conveys any sense that the hero – Garrett Hedlund, playing the Bridges character's son – is having any fun. For all its slick symmetries and cool curves, the redesigned *Tron*'s stormy black skies are a downer; why not set each act in a contrasting environment, as many game classics do? The script prattles about creating glorious new worlds but the one we're given is dourly sterile. Perhaps newcomers will be entranced, but I found no fireworks like those in the first film – Bridges' body being digitally dismembered, for example, or the fiery Greek mask of the evil computer.

Bridges returns in a dual role, as the centuries-old onetime hero (a caricature of the actor's zenned-out *Lebowski* persona) and also as the new villain. The bad Bridges appears in digitally rejuvenated form, à la Brad Pitt in *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* (2008). Despite some unconvincing moments when he's first introduced, he's passable

as an effect, but his charisma is gone. Hedlund and his vacuous love-interest (Olivia Wilde) are reduced to game pieces, leaving Michael Sheen to pep up some scenes as a cane-twirling albino showman. For a while it looks as if he might become the main baddie and conqueror of our 'real' world, which could have been fun. Instead, things wind down with some second-hand sky chases and stargates, and little sense of accomplishment or victory.

— Andrew Osmond

CREDITS

Directed by

Joseph Kosinski

Produced by

Sean Bailey

Jeffrey Silver

Steven Lisberger

Screenplay

Edward Kitsis

Adam Horowitz

Story

Edward Kitsis

Adam Horowitz

Brian Klugman

Lee Sternthal

Based on characters created by Steven Lisberger, Bonnie MacBird

Director of Photography

Claudio Miranda

Film Editor

James Haygood

Production Designer

Daren Gilford

Original Music

Daft Punk

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Production Companies

Walt Disney Pictures presents a Sean Bailey production

With the participation of the Province of British Columbia Production Services Tax Credit

Executive Producer

Donald Kushner

Co-producers

Justin Springer

Steve Gaub

Associate Producers

Bruce Franklin

Justis Greene

Unit Production Managers

Justis Greene

Heather Meehan

Production Co-ordinators

Jennifer Metcalf

Zoia Gomez

Production Accountant

Julie Jones

Location Manager

Kendrie Upton

Post-production Supervisor

Valerie Flueger Veras

Assistant Directors

1st: Bruce Franklin

1st: Pete Whyte

2nd: David Klohn

2nd: Rob Larson

Script Supervisor

Portia Belmont Tickell

Casting

Sarah Halley Finn

Canadian:

Coreen Mayrs

Heike Brandstatter

Camera Operators

John Clothier

Trig Singer

Spacecam Operator

Steve Koster

Gaffer

Andrew W. Davidson

Key Grip

Kimberly Olsen

Visual Effects

Supervisor:

Eric Barba

Producer:

Steve Gaub

Special Visual Effects/ Animation

Digital Domain

Additional Visual Effects Designed/ Produced by

Prologue Films

Digital Visual Effects

Mr. X Inc

Visual Effects

Prime Focus

Visual Effects/ Animation

Prana Studios Pvt. Ltd.

Visual Effects

Ollin

Whiskytree

Additional:

Eyeque

Gentle Giant

Facial Motion Capture Provided by

Mova

Motion Capture Services by

Electronic Arts Motion

Capture Studio

Vicon House of Moves,

Inc.

Special Effects Supervisor

Alex Burdett

Model Makers

Georges Kamm

A. Andrianko

Stereoscopic Producer



Fun-free zone: 'Tron Legacy'

Vince Pace

Associate Editors

Dylan Firschein

Wyatt Jones

Supervising Art Directors

Kevin Ishioka

Mark W. Mansbridge

Art Directors

Sean Haworth

Grant Van Der Slagt

William Ladd Skinner

Senior Set Designers

Rob Johnson

Benjamin Edelberg

Luis G. Hoyos

Set Designers

John Burke

David Clarke

Joseph Hiura

Margot Ready

Andrew Reeder

Bryan Sutton

Vehicle Set Designer

Karl Strahlendorf

Set Decorator

Lin MacDonald

Concept Illustrators

Dylan Cole

Thierry Doizon

Sebastien Larroude

David Levy

Edwin Natividad

Phil Saunders

Harald Belker

Nathan Schroeder

Vehicle Concept Designer

Daniel Simon

Lead Concept Artist

Neville Page

Concept Artists

Steve Jung

Fabian Lacey

Property Master

Jimmy H. Chow

Supervising Construction Co-ordinator

Jan Kobylyka

Costume Designer

Michael Wilkinson

Additional Costumes Designed by

Christine Bieselin Clark

Costume Supervisor

Tangi Crawford

Specialty Helmets

Ironhead Studio, Inc.

José Fernandez

Eric Harris

Agustin 'Gus' Navarrete

Specialty Program Costumes

Russ Shinkle

Film Illusions

Daft Punk Costume Design

©Daft Arts, Inc.

Special Effects Costumes by

Shawn Murphy

Bruce Boxleitner

Alan Bradley/Tron

CAST

Jeff Bridges

Kevin Flynn/Clu

Garrett Hedlund

Sam Flynn

Olivia Wilde

Quorra

Bruce Boxleitner

Alan Bradley/Tron

James Frain
Jarvis
Beau Garrett
Gem
Michael Sheen
Castor/Zuse
Anis Cheurfa
Rinzler
Serinda Swan
siren 2
Yaya DaCosta
siren 3
Elizabeth Mathis
siren 4
Yurij Kis
half-faced man
Conrad Coates
Bartik
Daft Punk
masked DJs
Ron Selmour
chattering homeless man
Dan Joffre
Ernie, key security guard 1
Darren Dolynski
young man on recognizer
Kofi Yiadom
disc opponent 2
Steven Lisberger
Shaddix
Donnelly Rhodes
Grandpa Flynn
Belinda Montgomery
Grandma Flynn
Owen Best
7-year-old Sam Flynn
Matt Ward
ISO boy
Zoe Fryklund
ISO girl
Dean Redman
light jet sentry
Mi-Jung Lee
Debra Chung
Christopher Logan
nervous program
Sheldon Yamkovy
desstitute program
Dale Wolfe
Irv Culpepper
Joanne Wilson
reporter 1
Catherine Lough
Haggquist
reporter 2
Thomas Bradshaw
security guard 2
Shafin Karim
East Indian taxi driver
Rob Daly
lead sentry
Mike Ching
blue gaming program
Michael Teigen
green gaming program
Brent Stait
purple gaming program
Shaw Madison
reporter 3

Army Esterle
young Mrs Flynn
Cody Laudan
End of the Line Club bouncer
Jeffrey Nordling
Richard Mackey
Christine Adams
Claire Atkinson
Kate Gajdosik
news anchor
Jack McGee
police photographer
Dawn Mander
crying program
Michael Logle
Kevin Flynn performance double
John Reardon
young Kevin Flynn/Clu performance double
Edie Mirman
computer voice
Allen Jo
black guard/disc opponent 1
Aaron Toney
Kofi Yiadom
Kim Do Nguyen
black guards

[uncredited]
Cillian Murphy
Ed Dillinger Jr

Dolby Digital/DTS/ SDDS
Colour by
DeLuxe
US prints by
Deluxe
International prints by
Technicolor

[2.35:1]
Some screenings presented in 3D

Distributor
Buena Vista International (UK)

11,280 ft +0 frames
(2D and 3D versions)

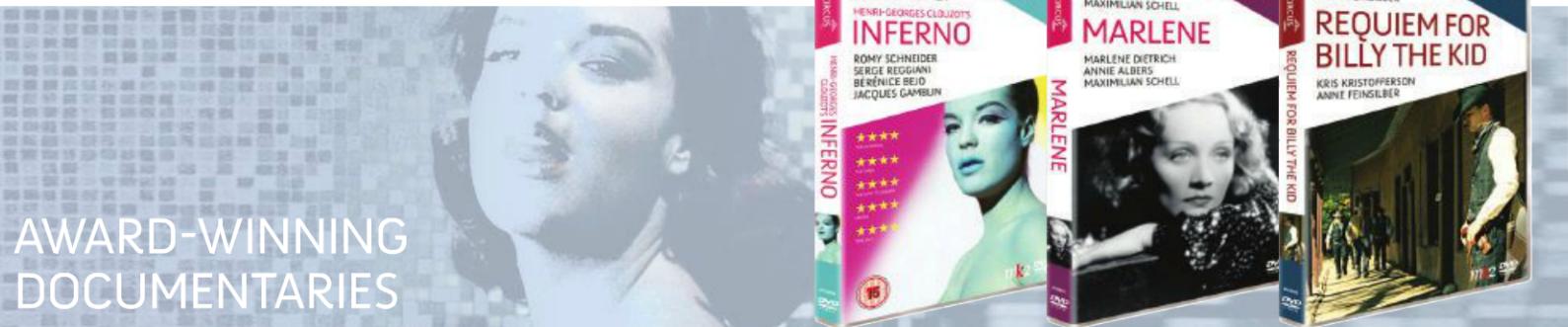
Main credits title
Tron
End credits title
Tron Legacy

SYNOPSIS As a child, Sam Flynn is told stories by his father Kevin about a wondrous computer-created universe. Kevin vanishes, leaving his computer empire ENCOM in the hands of soulless executives.

The adult Sam is a rebel, sabotaging ENCOM's activities. He hears about a call from Kevin's long-disused telephone number. Visiting the deserted games arcade once owned by Kevin, Sam triggers a computer program and is shot into the cyber-universe. There he meets the realm's ruler, who resembles a young version of Kevin. This is Clu, a program created by Kevin who usurped his 'father'. Sam is rescued by Quorra, a young woman who takes him to the real Kevin. Kevin explains that a new lifeform, the ISOs, spontaneously appeared in the cyber-universe, but Clu saw them as impurities and massacred them; Quorra is the sole survivor. When Sam visits the powerful program Zuse in an attempt to find a way back to his own world, Clu's men attack. Kevin and Quorra save Sam but Clu seizes Kevin's identity disc, which stores his centuries of accumulated knowledge.

Clu plans to invade the 'real' world. Sam, Kevin and Quorra reclaim the disc and flee in an aerial vehicle over the Sea of Simulation. They are chased by Clu and Tron, Kevin's former friend, now controlled by Clu. Tron overcomes his conditioning, but Clu throws him into the sea. At the portal between the two worlds, Kevin merges with Clu, destroying them both. Sam and Quorra emerge into Sam's world. Sam resolves to lead ENCOM, and shows Quorra a sunrise.

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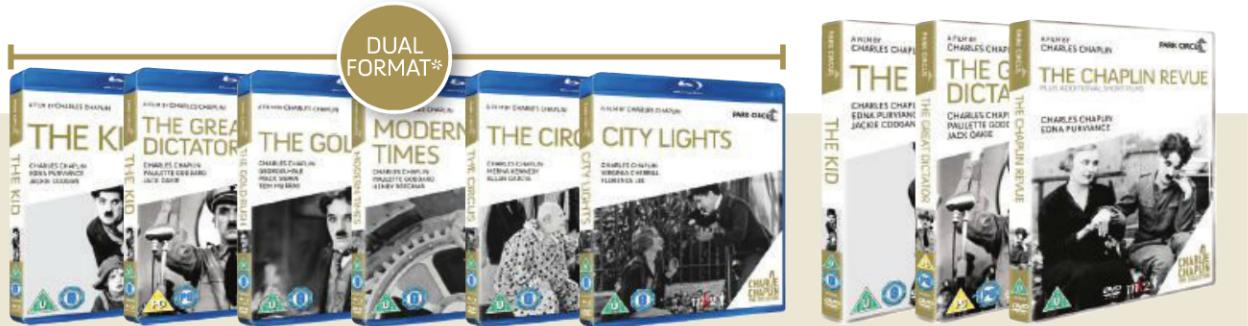
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True Grit

Directors: Joel Coen, Ethan Coen
With Jeff Bridges, Matt Damon, Josh Brolin, Barry Pepper

For the epigraph to their new adaptation of Charles Portis's 1968 novel *True Grit*, Joel and Ethan Coen adopt one of its narrator's chosen sayings: "The wicked flee where none pursueth." It's from the Book of Proverbs and continues, "but the righteous are bold as a lion." Mattie Ross (Hailee Steinfeld) is bold, all right. The 14-year-old daughter of a murdered man, she's out for justice or, failing that, vengeance, and displays disarmingly precocious efficacy: she's a formidable horse-trader both literal and metaphorical, securing cash for her father's livestock and using it to obtain the services of agreeably pitiless marshal 'Rooster' Cogburn (Jeff Bridges), whom she accompanies – along with self-regarding Texan ranger LaBoeuf (Matt Damon) – as they track Tom Chaney (Josh Brolin) through the Chocktaw Nation. The Coens' pictures are studded with such capable, no-nonsense women. Yet there's also something of the avenging fury about Mattie: the Coens' Cogburn calls her a "harpie" and Portis has her ejaculate, "I would not rest easy until that... cur was roasting and screaming in hell!" Is she, then, kin to *Fargo*'s Marge Gunderson or *No Country for Old Men*'s Anton Chigurh? And would being heir to either lineage count for more than her being a child?

Portis's novel is terse, witty, unsentimental and compulsive, its style not too many days' ride from Cormac McCarthy, its action peppered with God, gore and law-talk. Henry Hathaway's 1969 adaptation was highly faithful, though the Technicolor palette, sprinkling of Wayne-isms and ameliorated ending – not to mention the cheesy theme song – softened things. The film won John Wayne his Oscar and delivered a character, ornery but good, who was thought to warrant further prospecting. But 1975's *Rooster Cogburn*, a collision of *True Grit* and

The African Queen with Wayne and Katharine Hepburn, and a 1978 TV pilot with Warren Oates, failed to take. Now the story lets the Coens fully engage the western, a genre whose motifs have long laced their work, and reteam with Bridges, their Big Lebowski. His Cogburn is meaner than Wayne's but no less heroic. And the Coens' movie is less faithful than Hathaway's but stronger – the production, by their regular team, is formally superb – and weirder.

Bridges's Cogburn is first heard in the outhouse and seen in court, a bear with a sore head and neatly parted hair. The Coens play up his dry realism (his understated "Well, that didn't pan out" recalls *No Country*'s "It'll do till the mess gets here") and add notes of cruelty to an already hardened character: he kicks a child for the hell of it and makes agonising sport of a comrade's fresh wounds. This ambivalence sharpens the crucial moment when Cogburn seems to desert Mattie, and is underscored by Carter Burwell's music, which is derived from 'Leaning on the Everlasting Arms', the hymn made strange by *The Night of the Hunter* (1955). *True Grit* is less unsettling than that story – the male authority figure is, in the end, a good and reliable man – but the Coens inject something of its macabre fairytale timbre, retaining the book's grotesque touches and adding more. They make Mattie sleep in a funeral parlour and add a forest sequence with a hanged, bird-pecked man, a mysterious Native American and a big bearded dentist who looks like a bear on horseback; they send the grandiloquent LaBoeuf away twice and mangle his tongue; and the story's final, desperate ride becomes a swooning fantasia through which sweep stars and knives and bodies in the dirt. The tone is apt: for all her sharpness, this Mattie more than any other is plainly childlike, with her puppy fat, pigtails and too-big clothes, her moments of joy and terror. "I don't believe in fairytales or sermons or stories about money, baby sister," Cogburn tells her. Yet he proves himself to be the good hunter after all.

• Ben Walters

Credits for this film were unavailable at the time of going to press and will be published in the March issue.

SYNOPSIS Fort Smith, Arkansas, the 1880s. Frank Ross is shot dead by his drunken employee Tom Chaney, who flees. Ross's precociously capable 14-year-old daughter Mattie hires grizzled marshal Reuben 'Rooster' Cogburn to apprehend Chaney, who has joined 'Lucky' Ned Pepper's gang. LaBoeuf, a self-regarding Texas ranger pursuing Chaney for different reasons, teams up with Cogburn despite Mattie's objections. When they set out without her, she impresses Cogburn by riding through a river to catch up.

LaBoeuf leaves after a squabble. Cogburn and Mattie track the Pepper gang. Suspecting that LaBoeuf is following them, they seek shelter at a dugout where they encounter outlaws Quincy and Moon. After being shot in the leg, Moon reveals that the Pepper gang are coming: Quincy fatally attacks him and Cogburn kills Quincy. Spoiling Cogburn's ambush plan, LaBoeuf arrives at the cabin just before the gang, who grievously attack him. Cogburn sees them off, killing two, but their trail goes cold. Frustrated, LaBoeuf leaves again.

Fetching water, Mattie discovers Chaney. She shoots him but he seizes her and rejoins the gang. Pepper offers to spare Mattie if Cogburn departs; he does. The gang also depart, leaving Mattie with Chaney. Before he can kill her, LaBoeuf, whom Cogburn encountered, floors him. Cogburn faces down the four remaining gang members, killing three; LaBoeuf shoots Pepper. Chaney strikes LaBoeuf and Mattie shoots Chaney but falls into a pit, breaking her arm. She is bitten by a rattlesnake before Cogburn rescues her.

In 1903, Mattie, one-armed and unmarried, has Cogburn's body moved to the Ross lot.

The Warrior's Way

USA/Australia/Republic of Korea/India 2010
Director: Lee Sngmoo
With Geoffrey Rush, Kate Bosworth, Jang Dong Gun, Danny Huston
Certificate 15 100m 7s

Lee Sngmoo's expensive English-language wuxia-western has been described in Korea as a *bibimbap* (mixed dish), but it's more of a dog's breakfast. *The Warrior's Way* isn't so much a foolhardy *folie de grandeur* as an idiosyncratic, genre-busting attempt to break Jang Dong-gun, the handsome, dramatically limited South Korean star of 2004 megahit *Taegukgi (Brotherhood)* and others, in Hollywood.

Jang plays master swordsman Yang who, sickened by the centuries-old war between his clan and rival ninjas, leaves his home country behind and ends up working in a laundry in Lode, a dilapidated desert town somewhere in America. Debut writer-director Lee's quoted cinematic favourites include George Stevens's *Shane* (1953) and Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai* (1954), but his vision of the Old West is wackier than that of neo-exploitation maestro Robert Rodriguez: Lode's rogue's gallery of stranded circus-folk has been perambulating their crumbling kiosks and Ferris wheels, audienceless and workless, for close to a decade, donating to proceedings not an aura of baroque threat but rather a sense of arbitrary unreality. Lee indulges the racism of these strange townsfolk and cloaks his hero in a silence and passivity that in Jang's performance betoken not the accepted discipline of a potentially vengeful coiled spring, but rather a languid, tension-dispelling forgetfulness.

Lee riskily rations the competent, stylised, kendo-style ballet and dark, choreographed ninja-fighting sequences to the film's overture and the final, showdown reel. The rest is elaborately if irregularly digitalised, rotoscoped and chromaticised in the manner of Rodriguez's *Sin City* (2005) or Zack Snyder's *300* (2006), in an effort to harmonise the film's surface with that of contemporary video/arcade-game footage – a laborious endeavour that feels more like a deliberate act of

SYNOPSIS The late 19th century. Yang is the world's greatest swordsman. Sickening of the war between his ninja clan, the Sad Flute, and a rival, he refuses to kill the last enemy, a mewling baby, thus placing himself at the head of his own clan's hit list. Leaving his home country with the baby, April, Yang arrives in Lode, a desert town in America, to be greeted by stranded circus performers, including Ron, 8-Ball and Lynne, a feisty young sword-thrower. Flashbacks reveal that, years before, Lynne was the victim of a group of hell-riders; the gang's leader, the Colonel, killed Lynne's parents and attempted to rape her. Further flashbacks reveal that Yang's parents were also murdered; he was then trained as an assassin by the Master, who taught him to cut all emotional attachments. Yang teaches Lynne sword-throwing and swordfighting. Sad Flute ninjas, journeying towards America, attack a sailing ship and massacre the crew. The Colonel's gang return to attack Lode, resisted unsuccessfully by the resurgent townsfolk. Lynne, disguising herself as a prostitute, tries to trick and kill the Colonel. Yang, forced to take up his sword again, saves Lynne from the Colonel's henchmen but leaves her alone to battle – and kill – the Colonel. In a second battle, Yang vanquishes the Master and his Sad Flute army. Leaving April with Lynne, Yang departs alone.

artistic self-enfeeblement than an accommodating homage to an audiovisual cousin.

In concert with this solicitous sensitivity to juvenile sensibilities, Lee is similarly prepared to sacrifice Yang's continually advertised New Man status – shots of the ex-warrior happily cradling a gurgling baby, ironing thoughtfully in the laundry – by a reversion to the conventions of the lone avenger, but not before a coy, hour-long dalliance between Yang and Lynne that's almost guaranteed to confound even the most indulgent of the film's target audience. These scenes are clearly mounted to showcase Jang's crossover potential – he even essays some stumbling words of English – but their being staged as formalised sword-training exercises against blood-red 'blue-screened' sunsets on bizarre basketball-style dust mounds hardly makes for a romantic consummation to capture the hearts of the many hoped-for young female viewers. It all adds up to quite a strange mess – not so much a glowing exemplar of east meets west as an embarrassing instance of global misunderstanding, perhaps – but one, charitably, mostly innocent of cynicism and, by virtue of its naivety, largely inoffensive. • Wally Hammond

CREDITS

Associate Producers
 Carol Kim
 Stacy Ruppel
 Liz Tan
 Yoo Eunjung
Production Manager
 Moira Grant
Production Supervisor
 2nd Unit:
 Roh Soon Jai
Production Co-ordinators
 Sarah Spurway
 2nd Unit:
 Jo Tagg
Production Accountant
 Rebecca Hutton
Location Manager
 Janine Harwood
Post-production Supervisor
 Rosemary Dority
2nd Unit Director
 Charlie Haskell
Assistant Directors
 1st: Chris Webb
 2nd: Quentin Whitewell
2nd Unit
 1st: Axel Paton
 2nd: Rachael Boggs
Script Supervisors
 Oksana Sokol
 2nd Unit:
 Monique Knight
Casting US
 Wendy O'Brien
Casting NZ
 Liz Mullane
Script Editor
 Vanessa Alexander

Additional Writing
Scott Reynolds
Camera Operators
Dana Little
2nd Unit
Andrew McGeorge
Steadicam
Dana Little
Gaffers
Darryl Williams
2nd Unit:
Marc Mateo
Key Grips
Kevin Donovan
2nd Unit:
Simon Hawkins
Visual Effects Supervisor
Jason Piccioni
Visual Effects
Mofac
Digital Dimension
Photon NZFX Ltd.
PRPVFX Ltd.
Digipost
GeoFX
VrmaxFX
Special Effects
Supervisor: Mike Latham
Co-ordinator: Paul Verrall
Additional Editing
Paul Maxwell
Supervising Art Director
Phill Ivey
On-set Art Director
Ross McGarva
Set Designer
Nick Connor
Set Decorator
Megan Verlelle
Property Master
Matt Cornelius
Construction Supervisor
Fraser Harvey
Costume Designer
James Acheson
Costume Supervisor
Erin O'Neill
Make-up/Hair Designer
Jane O'Kane
Key Make-up/Hair Artist
Vinnie Smith
2nd Unit Supervisor: Vanessa Hurley
Main/End Titles
Chris Mills
Natasha Dahlberg
Score Performed by
New Zealand Symphony Orchestra
Choir
Orpheus Choir
Orchestrator/Conductor
Nicholas Dodd
Soundtrack
"Kim Duk Soo Samulnori Best" – Kim Duk Soo & Samulnori; "Jesse James" by Ry Cooder – The Range Band; "D'amor sull'ali rose" from "Il Trovatore" by Giuseppe Verdi – Maria Callas, the Coro e Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala; "Silent Night" – Mary Jane Ballou; "Calliope" – Plan 9; "Solenne in quest'ora" by Giuseppe Verdi – Mario Del Monaco, Ettore Bastianini, the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia
Choreographer
Carla Martell
Supervisor/Sound Designer
Tim Preble
Production Mixer
David Madigan
Re-recording Mixers
Gethin Creagh
Gilbert Lake
Stunt Co-ordinator
Augie Davis
Fight Choreographer
Yuki Shimomura
Horse Co-ordinator
Steve Old
Head Wrangler/Rider
Len Baynes

CAST

Geoffrey Rush

Ron

Kate Bosworth
Lynne
Jang Dong-gum
Yang
Danny Huston
the Colonel
Tony Cox
8-Ball
Ti Lung
Saddest Flute
Analin Rudd
baby April
Markus Hamilton
Baptiste
Rod Loush
Craig
Matt Gillanders
Geyser
Christina Asher
Esmerelda
Jed Brophy
Jacques
Carl Bland
Billy
Ian Harcourt
Lofty
Tony Wyeth
Smithy
Ryan Richards
Slug
Nic Sampson
Pug
Ash Jones
Rug
Phil Grieve
Ivar
Eddie Campbell
Colonel's deputy
Ebony Sushames
Mexican daughter
Aimee Renata
Mexican daughter
Patricia Santana
Mexican wife
Isbert Ramos
Mexican husband
Ross Duncan
barkeep
Murata Makoto
Sad Flute deputy
Chontelle Melgren
young Lynne
Cath Harkins
Lynne's mother
Neill Rea
Lynne's father
Elliott Officer
Lynne's baby brother
Ken Smith
young Yang (5 years)
Ch Youngmin
young Yang (10 years)
Helene Wong
grandmother
Lee Han Garl
greatest sword
Michael Deane
sailor
Ken McColl
lion tamer
David Austin
one-man band
Brent Crozier
cook
Mathew Burgess
young Slug
Phoenix Brown Rigg
young Rug
Jack Rogers
young Pug
Peter Daube
John Rawls
Itai Biran
Josh Randall
Andy Conlan
Matthew Morris
Reuben De Jong
Hell Riders
Robert Wootton
Wayne Gordon
Brenton Surgenor
Richard Coningham
clowns
Angela McInerney
Sandra Terry
Louise Shadbolt
Anna Giordani
women with bad teeth
Dolby Digital/DTS/SDS
Colour by
Park Road Post
Production
[2.35:1]
Distributor
Entertainment Film
Distributors Ltd
9,010 ft +12 frames

The Way Back

Director: Peter Weir

With Jim Sturgess, Ed Harris, Saoirse Ronan, Colin Farrell
Certificate 12A 132m 32s

It's a long way from Siberia to India. A long, long, long way. Peter Weir's first film since 2003's *Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World* is an impressively mounted reconstruction of a cross-continental journey described by Polish exile Slavomir Rawicz in his 1956 memoir *The Long Walk*, recalling how he and some fellow prisoners escaped from a Soviet Gulag in 1940 and trekked thousands of miles to freedom in India over the course of a year. The veracity of his story has been cast into doubt by recent research, but there is documentary evidence that someone, if not Rawicz, completed this extraordinary feat, and a film version has been in and out of development since the 1960s. Arguably, the reasons why it hasn't made it to the screen before now are discernible in the flaws in Weir's film: as a tale of bravery and endurance, it ought to be a classic adventure story – it's just that, somehow, nothing exactly happens.

Weir is known as a stickler for detailed research and you can see it in every frame here, from the carefully reconstructed squalor of the freezing, louse-ridden labour camp to the stages of physical disintegration suffered by the band of escapees as they cross the scorching sand of the Gobi desert. There are some meticulous performances among the weary plodders too: Jim Sturgess embodies monomaniacal focus as the group's leader Janusz, determined to find his lost wife; Ed Harris is majestically still as Smith, the grizzled American wise man who says little and sees much; and Colin Farrell – an acquired taste in many ways – is surprisingly good as Valka, the hardcore gangster who combines a childlike dependence on hierarchy with a bloodthirstily pragmatic survivalism. The other men – particularly the usually very watchable Mark Strong – get the short straw in a script that sketches all its characters as simple archetypes, then hides them in a blizzard, under identical beards, hats and overcoats, so that it's impossible to tell them apart.

The biggest clanger, though, is the introduction of a saccharine waif, Irena



Grizzly men: 'The Way Back'

(Saoirse Ronan), who drifts into the group somewhere along the way and cheers them all up with her cute chatter and Pollyanna outlook. You can see why she's there – to dilute all the taciturnity and testosterone, and expiate the men's sins with her innocence – but Weir would have done better to find a way to develop that redemption from his characters' internal growth rather than relying on a thinly disguised Christ-symbol.

Indeed, for a film so concerned with propitiation and so laden with evangelical morality, it's surprising how little the characters learn during their extended ordeal. Janusz's tormented determination – his inability to stop walking, even when he's reached safety – has a pathological quality that isn't explained, beyond the visions he has of his lost home. The goal of the trek seems to become the trek itself, its grinding hardship and its endlessness; and whereas there might be an interesting film to be made about what it takes to reduce a man to this kind of demented restlessness, Weir prefers to paint Janusz as a hero and leave it at that.

The psychological void at its heart is why, despite its ambulatory array of incident, this feels like a film about nothing. It's a long way to go for no apparent reason.

– **Lisa Mullen**

Credits for this film were unavailable at the time of going to press and will be published in the March issue.

SYNOPSIS Poland, 1940. A young Pole, Janusz, is convicted of spying after his wife is tortured into falsely informing on him. Sent to a Siberian Gulag, he immediately starts plotting his escape. He gathers a band of conspirators to accompany him, including Smith, an American, and violent criminal Valka. Once they have broken out of the camp they will have to walk beyond the outer reaches of the Soviet Union, thousands of miles south to British-controlled India.

Their trek takes them through Siberian wastes, mosquito-plagued Mongolia, the Gobi desert and the Himalayas; they struggle to find food along the way. A girl, Irena, joins them; her sympathy and vulnerability bring the team together, and her death from exhaustion is a devastating blow.

Finally, Valka decides to remain in the Soviet Union, which is all he knows, and take his chances as a fugitive; Smith stays in a Tibetan monastery to regain his strength before attempting a return to the US; Janusz, driven by the determination to find his wife, reaches India.

Only as an old man, after the fall of the Iron Curtain, does he return to Poland to find his wife waiting for him.

CREDITS UPDATE

The reviews of these films were published in our December (*Jackass 3D*) and January (*Cuckoo, Love & Other Drugs*) issues but unfortunately credits were unavailable at the time of going to press. We are still waiting for credits for *Adrift*, *Megamind*, *Skyline* and *Waiting for "Superman"*.

Cuckoo

United Kingdom 2010
Certificate 15 89m 8s

CREDITS

Directed by

Richard Bracewell

Produced by

Tony Bracewell

Richard Bracewell

Written by

Richard Bracewell

Director of Photography

Mark Partridge

Editor

Craig M. Cotterill

Production Designer

Simon Sculion

Music by/Orchestrator & Conductor

Andrew Hewitt

©Cuckoo Films Ltd

Production Companies

Verve Pictures presents a Cuckoo Films Ltd production

Supported by Screen

East, UK Film Council,

Prime Focus

Executive Producer

Nicholas Tanner

Line Producer

Adrian Kelly

Associate Producers

Keith Tutt

Raj Dutta

Sam Lewis

Production Manager

Sarah-Jane Wheale

Production Co-ordinator

Niccolò Cioni

Production Accountant

Sarah Hulls

Location Managers

David Kellick

Christian Reynish

Assistant Directors

1st: Phill Reeves

1st: Toni Staples

2nd: Roger Thomas

2nd: Anna Kemp

Script Supervisor

Julie Daly-Wallman

Casting

Dan Hubbard

Gaffer

Kenny Redford

Key Grip

David Logan

Special Effects Supervisor

Jeremy King

Art Director

Tim Blake

Property Master

Ewan Robertson

Construction Manager

Simon Pickup

Construction Supervisor

Stefano Ferrara

Costume

Susie Phillips

Make-up Designer

Serena Loretta

Orchestra

The Composers

Ensemble

Cello Solos

Adrian Bradbury

Sound Recordist

Jonathan Wyatt

Sound Re-recording Mixer
Martin Jensen

CAST

Laura Fraser

Polly

Antonia Bernath

Jimi

Adam Fenton

Chapman

Tamsin Greig

Dr Simon Livingstone

Richard E. Grant

Professor Julius

Greengrass

Richard Brake

Lane Wolf

Ben Righton

Nick

Ken Drury

Mr O'Brien

Claire Price

Gemma

David Maybrick

man at bonfire

Stephen Aintree

running man

Helen Betty Knott

medical student

In Colour

Distributor

Verve Pictures

8,022 ft +0 frames

CREDITS UPDATE

Jackass 3D

USA 2010

Certificate 18 93m 52s

CREDITS

Directed by Jeff Tremaine
Produced by Jeff Tremaine
Spoke Jonze
Johnny Knoxville
Concepts by Jeff Tremaine
 Johnny Knoxville
 Bam Margera
 Steve-O
 Chris Pontius
 Ryan Dunn
 Jason 'Wee Man' Acuna
 Preston Lacy
 'Danger Ehren'
 McGhehey
 Dave England
 Spike Jonze
 Loomis Fall
 Barry Owen Smoler
 The Dudesons
 Dave Carnie
 Mike Kassak
 Madison Clapp
 Knate Gwaltney
 Derek Freda
 Trip Taylor
 Sean Cliver
 Dimitry Elyashkevich
 JxPx Blackmon
 Rick Kosick
Director of Photography Dimitry Elyashkevich
Edited by Seth Casriel
 Matthew Probst
 Matthew Kosinski
Production Designer JxPx Blackmon

©Paramount Pictures Corporation
Production Companies Paramount Pictures and MTV Films present a Dickhouse production
Executive Producers Van Toffler
 Derek Freda
 Trip Taylor
Segment Producers Jennifer Welsh
 Robert Zappia
Co-producers Sean Cliver
 Dimitry Elyashkevich
 Bam Margera
Line Producer Greg Iguchi
Associate Producers Shanna Zablow
 Greg Wolf
 Knate Gwaltney
 Barry Owen Smoler
Unit Production Manager Derek Freda
Production Supervisor Mark Swenson
Production Co-ordinators Terrance Colgan Martin
 Lindsey Shupe
 Stereoscopic: Louis Moulinet
Production Accountant Sarah Morse
Location Manager Craig W. Van Gundy
Post Producer Volney Howard IV
Digital Production Co-ordinator Mike Bodkin

Researcher Selina Becker
2nd Unit Director Spike Jonze
Assistant Directors 1st: Craig Conolly
 2nd: Rachel Dickson
2nd Unit 1st: Thomas P. Smith
 1st: Kate Greenberg
 2nd: Zach Hunt
Stereographic Photography Services Provided by Paradise FX
Stereoscopic Conversion Stereo D, LLC
Camera Operators A: Rick Kosick
 B: Donny Anderson
 B: Lance Bangs
 B: Joseph Frantz
 B: Tyler Swain
 B: Whitey
 McConaughy
2nd Unit Lance Acord
 Phantom: Sean Coles
2nd Unit Gaffer Marcelo L. Colacilli
2nd Unit Key Grips Rocky S. Rodriguez
 Stephen B. Martinez
3D Supervising Producer Aaron Parry
Special Effects Supervisor: Elia P. Popov
 Co-ordinator: Joe Pancake
 Consultants: Elia P. Popov
 Oscar Albuerne
Beavis and Butthead
Animation by Film Roman
Animation Segment Writers John Altschuler
 Dave Krinsky
Art Director Seth Meisterman
Set Decorator Mike Kassak
Property Master Scott Manning
Make-up Artist Liz Mendoza
Make-up Effects Designer: Tony Gardner
 Artists: Barney Burman
 Jamie Kelman
 Stephen Prouty
 Aaron Romero
 Justin Stafford
Puppeteer Peter Chevako
Title/Graphics Design Johannes Gamble
Music Supervisor Ben Hochstein
Soundtrack "Corona (Jackass Opera Mix)" – Squeak E. Clean;
 "Corona" – Minutemen;
 "The Kids Are Back" – Twisted Sister;
 "Brand New Key" – Melanie;
 "Gonna Fly Now" (Theme from Rocky) – Bill Conti; "Ride of the Valkyries" by Richard Wagner; "I Got Your Number" – Cok Sparrer; "You Can't

Rollskate in a Buffalo Herd"; "Peer Gynt – Morning" by Edvard Grieg; "Knoxville Boogie" – Deke Dickerson; "Fun Time Rag"; "Electric Avenue" – Eddy Grant; "Egypt in a Nutshell" – The Deadly Syndrome; "Your French Is Out"; "The Orlotan"; "Charge!" – The Deadly Syndrome; "Boom Boom Pow" – Black Eyed Peas; "Legacy of Blood" – Internal Corrosion; "I'm Shakin'" – The Blasters; "Mr Touchdown, U.S.A." – The University of Michigan Band; "Drum Line #4" – Benjamin Forrest Davis; "When Johnny Comes Marching Home" – Hale & Wilder; "Rose's Abattoir" – Brendan Carty; "Party in My Pants" – Roger Alan Wade; "Invisible Man" – Smut Peddlers; "Talkin' Baseball (Willie, Mickey & the Duke)" – Terry Cashman; "1812 Overture – Abridged Version" by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky – George Wilson; "Afterworld" – CKY; "If You're Gonna Be Dumb, You Gotta Be Tough" – Karen O; "Memories" – Weezer
Sound Mixer Cordell Mansfield
Re-recording Mixers Joe Barnett
 Mathew Waters
Supervising Sound Editor Mike Wilhoit
Stunt Co-ordinators Charles Grisham
 Roy Farfel
 Jason Rodriguez
 Durk Tyndall
WITH
 Johnny Knoxville
 Bam Margera
 Ryan Dunn
 Steve-O
 Wee Man
 Preston Lacy
 Chris Pontius
 Danger Ehren
 Dave England
 Loomis Fall
 Tony Hawk
 Eric Koston
 April Margera
 Phil Margera
 Spike Jonze
 Trip Taylor
 Rick Kosick
 Dimitry Elyashkevich
 Greg Iguchi
 Brandon Novak
 Manny Puig
 Erik Roner
 Jeff Tremaine
 Judd Lefew
 Lance Bangs
 Gregory J. Wolf
 Josh Brown
 Mat Hoffman
 Rake Yohn
 Omar Von Muller
 Wendy Decoito

Madison Clapp
Jack Polick
Sean Cliver
Mike Kassak
Seamus Frawley
Jukka Hilden
Jarppi Leppälä
HP Parvainen
Jarno Laasala
Erik Ainge
Jared Allen
Seann William Scott
Will Bailey
Andy Bell
Mark Zupan
Tommy Passemante
Parks Bonifay
Jess Margera
Will Oldham
Gary Lefew
Brett Lefew
David Weathers
Rip Taylor
John Taylor
Jesse Merlin
Eddie Barbanell
Dr David Kipper
Kerry A. Getz
Priya Swaminathan
Scott Shriner
Brian Bell
Rivers Cuomo
Terra Jolé
Stevie 'Puppet' Lee
Bobby Tovey
Dana Michael Woods
Chris 'Little Kato'
Tony 'Teo' Elliott
Mark Povinelli
Kevin Thompson
Anne Bellamy
Angie Simms
voice of Beavis and Butthead
Mike Judge
Dolby Digital/SDDS
In Colour
[1.78:1]
3D
Distributor Paramount Pictures UK
8,448 ft +0 frames

Love & Other Drugs

USA 2010

Certificate 15 112m 11s

CREDITS

Directed by Edward Zwick
Produced by Scott Stuber
 Edward Zwick
 Marshall Herskovitz
 Charles Randolph
 Pieter Jan Brugge
Screenplay Charles Randolph
 Edward Zwick
 Marshall Herskovitz
 Based on the book *Hard Sell: The Evolution of a Viagra Salesman* by Jamie Reidy
Director of Photography David B. Nowell
 Additional Aerial Photography: Dino Parks
Camera Operators A: Chris Hayes
 B: Rick Davidson
 Additional Aerial Photography: Dino Parks
Steadicam Operator Steven Fierberg
Film Editor Steven Rosenblum
Production Designer Patti Podesta
Music James Newton Howard

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Production Companies Fox 2000 Pictures and Regency Enterprises present a New Regency/Stuber Pictures/Bedford Falls production An Edward Zwick film Made in association with Dune Entertainment Production services provided by Soho Square Productions No.11 LLP
Production Companies Fox 2000 Pictures and Regency Enterprises present a New Regency/Stuber Pictures/Bedford Falls production An Edward Zwick film Made in association with Dune Entertainment Production services provided by Soho Square Productions No.11 LLP
Executive Producers Arnon Milchan
 Margaret Riley
Associate Producers Troy Putney
 Darin Rivetti
Unit Production Manager Pieter Jan Brugge
Music Supervisor Randall Poster
Production Supervisor Julie M. Anderson
Production Co-ordinator Robb Earnest
Production Accountant Julie Snow
Supervising Location Manager John Latenser V
Location Manager Shawn Boyachek
Assistant Directors 1st: Darin Rivetti
 2nd: Francesco Tignini
Script Supervisor Rebecca Robertson-Szwaja

Casting Victoria Thomas NY:
 Mele Nagler Pittsburgh:
 Donna Belajac
Aerial Directors of Photography Edward T. Nowell
 Additional Aerial Photography: Dino Parks
Camera Operators A: Chris Hayes
 B: Rick Davidson
 Additional Aerial Photography: Dino Parks
Steadicam Operator Steven Fierberg
Film Editor Steven Rosenblum
Production Designer Patti Podesta
Music James Newton Howard
 - The Kinks; "Praise You" – Fatboy Slim; "Heaven Is a Place on Earth" – Belinda Carlisle; "Way over Yonder in the Minor Key" – Bill Bragg, Wilco; "Show-Biz Blues" – Fleetwood Mac; "Sleep Together" – Garbage; "Engine Heart" – Mirah; "Jack-ass" – Beck; "Fidelity" – Regina Spektor
Sound Mixer Edward T. Nowell
Re-recording Mixers Andy Nelson
 Anna Behrner
Supervising Sound Editor John A. Larsen
Stunt Co-ordinators Stephen Pope
 G.A. Aguilar

CAST
Jake Gyllenhaal Jamie Foxx
Anne Hathaway Maggie Murdock
Oliver Platt Bruce Winston
Hank Azaria Dr Stan Knight
Josh Gad Josh Randall
Gabriel Macht Gary Kosko
Set Decorator Meg Everist
Maggie's Artwork Ray Bivins
Photographs by Cynthia E. Thornton
Art Director Martin Cohen
 David James
Maggie's Artwork by Judie Bamber
 Kristin Beirner James
Property Master Tim Wiles
Construction Co-ordinator Buster Pile
Costume Designer Deborah L. Scott
Costume Supervisor Amy L. Arnold
Department Head Natalie Gold
 Dr Helen Randall
Make-up Elaine Offers
Key Make-up Artist Megan Ferguson
 Farrah
Department Head Hair Michael Benjamin Washington
 Jerry Popolis
Key Hair Stylist Cheryl Daniels
Titles Moving Target
Vocals Vivian Baker
Department Head Hair Jerry Popolis
Music Supervisor Randall Poster
Soundtrack "Two Princes" – Spin Doctors; "Cannibal" – The Breeders; "Also sprach Zarathustra" by Richard Strauss – Symphony Orchestra Baden Baden; "Macarena (Bayside Boys Mix)" – Macarena (River Remix) – Los Del Rio; "Rude Boys Outta Jail" – The Specials; "Supernova" – Liz Phair; "Standing in the Doorway" – Bob Dylan; "A Well Respected Man" – Max Osinski
Dolby Digital Colour by DeLuxe
[1.85:1]
Distributor 20th Century Fox International (UK)
10,096 ft +8 frames

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The daddy of them all

Elia Kazan's explorations of post-war society reveal him to be one of America's greats, argues Graham Fuller

The Elia Kazan Collection

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn/Boomerang/Gentleman's Agreement/Pinky/Panic in the Streets/A Streetcar Named Desire/Viva Zapata!/Man on a Tightrope/On the Waterfront/East of Eden/Baby Doll/A Face in the Crowd/Wild River/Splendor in the Grass/America America

Elia Kazan; US 1945-63; Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment/Region 1 NTSC; 128/88/118/102/96/122/113/105/108/115/114/126/109/124/168 minutes; Features: 'A Letter to Elia' documentary directed by Martin Scorsese and Kent Jones (2010); 'Streetcar' and 'East of Eden' are packaged with separate discs of extras

In curating this formidable box-set, Martin Scorsese has chosen to include 15 of Kazan's 19 features – a body of work that comprises the most sustained inquiry into psychological and social flux by any American filmmaker in the post-war period. It includes critiques of poverty ('A Tree Grows in Brooklyn'), anti-Semitism ('Gentleman's Agreement'), racism ('Pinky'), communist oppression in Eastern Europe ('Man on a Tightrope') and the Red Scare in America (allegorically in 'Panic in the Streets'), female dependence on men in the South via Tennessee Williams ('A Streetcar Named Desire' and 'Baby Doll'), revolution ('Viva Zapata!'), union corruption ('On the Waterfront'), puritanism and generational conflict ('East of Eden', 'Splendor in the Grass'), the manipulative power of television ('A Face in the Crowd'), rugged individualism, the New Deal and segregation ('Wild River'), and the immigrant dream ('America America').

Nobody else at their peak in 1950s Hollywood – not Hitchcock, Wilder, Sirk, Stevens, Minnelli, Zinnemann or Kazan's old hitchhiking buddy Nicholas Ray – matched Kazan for energy, eclecticism, the strength of his liberal convictions, or the ability to inspire and manipulate actors. Although he couldn't cure Dorothy McGuire of her ladylike mannerisms in 'A Tree Grows in Brooklyn', or melt the rigidity of Dana Andrews in 'Boomerang' and Gregory Peck in 'Gentleman's Agreement', those dated 1940s films were Kazan's apprentice efforts, and it was he who presided over the Method-driven evolution of American film-acting from the enunciative to the naturalistic.

Following 'On the Waterfront', in which Marlon Brando's longshoreman morphs from Mafia stooge to stool pigeon



Oh brother: left to right, Julie Harris, Richard Davalos and James Dean in Elia Kazan's 'East of Eden'

One of Kazan's great strengths was rooting the political in the intimate

to hero, characterisation in Kazan's films meanwhile expanded from the simplistically black or white to the ambivalent. Thus the 'bad' son Cal (James Dean) and the 'good' son Aron (Richard Davalos) change places in 'East of Eden'. Archie Lee (Karl Malden) remains the ridiculous, shabby Southern aristocrat in 'Baby Doll' but grows in what Kazan called 'humanness', as does his teenage virgin bride (Carroll Baker) and his rival (Eli Wallach). Jo Van Fleet's obdurate landowner and Montgomery Clift's idealistic government lackey, who has come to evict her from her Tennessee home, are both right and both wrong in 'Wild River', which increasingly looks like one of Kazan's finest films. Even the sexually repressive mother who drives the fragile Deanie (Natalie Wood) mad in 'Splendor in the Grass' senses by the end that she may not have acted in her daughter's best interests.

One of Kazan's great strengths was rooting the political in the intimate. Peck's journalist character learns more about bigotry against Jews from his

supposedly liberal fiancée (McGuire) than from his undercover foraging as a Gentile pretending to be Jewish. Stanley and Blanche in 'Streetcar', Cal and Abra in 'East of Eden', Baby Doll and Silva, Marcia and Lonesome in 'A Face in the Crowd', Chuck and Carol in 'Wild River' and Deanie and Bud in 'Splendor' all dance sexual pas de deux that highlight their social dilemmas. And stylistically, Kazan, coolest of metteurs en scène, sometimes out-Sirked Sirk: the smashing of the mirror that symbolises Stanley's rape of Blanche destroys her fragile narcissistic existence; the attempt by Bud's dissolute sister to kiss her autocratic oil baron father, both doomed, on the New Year's Eve before the Wall Street Crash, suggests that his business and his blood are symbiotically tainted.

This fraught intimacy extends to the relationships between fathers and sons in Kazan – Cal and Adam in 'East of Eden', Bud and Ace in 'Splendor', Stavros and Isaac in 'America America'. In the television documentary directed, co-written and presented by Scorsese that's included here, he explains with utmost tenderness how, on seeing 'East of Eden' as a 12-year-old boy, he identified with Cal as an underappreciated younger brother desperate to please his father – and how as a result he started to cast Kazan "in the role of a father".

(Frightened of his father and made to feel that he was a disappointment, Kazan too had identified with John Steinbeck's original Cal.)

The Kazan films that Scorsese has omitted from the set are his second, 'The Sea of Grass' (1947), an anonymous Tracy-Hepburn ranching melodrama on which he was constrained by MGM, and his last three: 'The Arrangement' (1969), based on a semi-autobiographical bestseller about commercial compromise; 'The Visitors' (1972), a minimalist post-Vietnam War revenge drama shot in 16mm; and 'The Last Tycoon' (1976), which suffered from Harold Pinter's incomplete Fitzgerald adaptation and Kazan's apparent lack of appetite for fighting producer Sam Spiegel over key creative decisions. The key absence may be 'The Visitors', which explores the personal cost of assigning guilt rather less self-servingly than did 'On the Waterfront', made two years after Kazan had named eight former fellow communists from his Group Theater days before the House of Un-American Activities Committee in 1952. His momentous decision to do so, which he considered the lesser of two evils, scarcely detracts from his power as an artist. Scorsese, for one, believes it turned him from a 'director' into a 'filmmaker'.

BFI STILLS, POSTERS AND DESIGNS (1)

NEW RELEASES

A Bay of Blood

Mario Bava; Italy 1971; Arrow Video/Region 0; Certificate 18; 81 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.85:1 anamorphic; Features: commentary, 'Joe Dante Remembers *Twitch of the Death Nerve*', 'Shooting a Spaghetti Splatter Classic', 'The Giallo Gems of Dardano Sacchetti', trailers, radio spots

Film: It's probably a coincidence that Mario Bava's *giallo* splatter classic had a UK reissue within days of Masters of Cinema's revival of *La signora di tutti* (see page 89), but the brief presence of Isa Miranda adds an intriguing real-life pendant to Max Ophuls's study of the trajectory of 20th-century fame, as glossy 1930s/40s glamour segued into 1960s/70s blood-drenched exploitation. But this is one of the genre's defining entries, a tortuously convoluted multiple murder(er) mystery in which an old woman's inheritance leads to a spate of killings, some victims directly involved, others unfortunate passers (or swimmers) by. Released in the US under the far superior title *Twitch of the Death Nerve* (apparently at Bava's own suggestion), it became the direct ancestor of the 1970s slasher outbreak, though few American filmmakers matched Bava's visual brio.

Disc: It's hard to imagine a more definitive edition. Two cuts of the film are included, but the Italian-language print is only fractionally longer, visually inferior and just as obviously post-synched as the English version, which has had all previous BBFC cuts waived. Several Bava fans and colleagues pay homage, starting with *S&S* contributor Tim Lucas's encyclopedic commentary and continuing through Joe Dante's affectionate reminiscence, Edgar Wright's analysis of two of the trailers, and interviews with assistant cameraman Gianlorenzo Battaglia and prolific *giallo*/horror screenwriter Dardano Sacchetti. The Blu-ray edition was not supplied for review. (MB) (MFB 556)



Franz Kafka's A Country Doctor

A nervous-breakdown masterpiece, a spooky panic-attack of a film with a Ralph Steadman-like wickedness

La ciénaga

Lucrecia Martel; Argentina 2001; ICA Films/Region 2; Certificate 12; 103 minutes; Aspect Ratio 16:9

Film: Dripping with sweat and torpor, Lucrecia Martel's atmospheric debut drama has more than a touch of Southern gothic, as the wine-soused adults of a decaying Argentine family let their teenage children run wild on a remote estate. The subtly rendered themes of Martel's later work appear more broadly here, in the plight of the estate's Amerindian servants, and the covert, incestuous alliances that surround self-pitying matriarch Mecha. Despite the film's metaphor overkill – a stagnant swimming pool and shaky ladder loom large, and thunder rumbles ominously – Martel's style is already flutteringly deft and light, building unsettling tensions throughout with the oblique shooting style that would mature into the elegant ambiguity of *The Headless Woman* (2008). Where Antonioni

echoes through that piece, here Martel's sprawling, fractious provincial gentry are channelling Chekhov, without the chuckles.

Disc: A more than passable transfer, presented without extras. (KS)

Deep Red

Dario Argento; Italy 1975; Arrow Video/Region 0; Certificate 18; 121/100 minutes; Aspect Ratio 2.35:1 anamorphic; Features: Claudio Simonetti introduction, commentary, trailers, 'From Celluloid to Shop', 'Lady in Red', 'Music to Murder For!', 'Rosso Recollections'

Film: The major transitional work in Dario Argento's career, still notionally a *giallo* thriller but with a marked tendency towards the surreal and supernatural that signposted the emergence of *Suspiria* and *Inferno* by the decade's end. On one level, it's a Hitchcockian tease that compiles a number of virtuoso suspense set pieces, but on the other it's a logical successor to the previous Italian-made David Hemmings vehicle, Antonioni's *Blow-up*, in that Argento's extraordinary command of screen space is used constantly to goad his audience into questioning their own perception of events. A second viewing reveals that a climactic flashback doesn't lie: the face of an ostensibly mysterious killer is clearly visible immediately after the murder for those who know where to look.

Disc: This jam-packed edition kicks off with two excellent transfers of the Italian and European cuts (the first in Italian, both in English, optional subtitles where necessary and previous BBFC cuts waived). Four featurettes (totalling over an hour) showcase interviews with Argento, co-star Daria Nicolodi and composer Claudio Simonetti, and profile Luigi Cozzi's

Roman horror memorabilia shop Profondo Rosso. The commentary by Danish director Thomas Rostock is worth a listen but tends to describe what is already obvious. The Blu-ray edition was not supplied for review. (MB) (MFB 610)

Franz Kafka's A Country Doctor & Other Fantastic Films by Koji Yamamura

Yamamura Koji; Japan 1987-2007; Zeitgeist/Kimstim/Region 1 NTSC; 124 minutes total; Aspect Ratio 16:9/4:3; Features: essay

Films: In a sheeny anime world of style homogeneity and apocalyptic hyperbole, there are quite naturally Japanese animators exploring other palettes and radical strategies, and of these arguably the most arresting is Yamamura Koji, for whom an animated film experience is an occasion for nerve-racking expressionism, hand-drawn manic seizures and perspectival nightmares.

In the two decades of work represented here, Yamamura comes off as savagely surreal and childlike in turn; his techniques and attitudes run the gauntlet and defy categorisation. The disc is aptly titled, because *Franz Kafka's A Country Doctor* (2007), Yamamura's longest work at 21 minutes, is a nervous-breakdown masterpiece, an intensely spooky panic-attack of a film that has a Ralph Steadman-like wickedness to its lines but a wholly distinct visual character. Kafka's schizoid little tale is realised perfectly, down to the shuddering snowstorm, the haunted horses, the maggots and the externalised sense of madness, with Yamamura applying layers of suggestive imagery, from raw pencil to foreground 3D objects, all of it moving at a speed and jittery texture that's truly alarming. The other films, though consistently inventive, are warm-ups that sometimes veer towards Norman McLaren cuteness. The best are the Oscar-nominated *Mt. Head* (2002); *The Old Crocodile* (2005), which apes the primitive drawings of the tale's author Léopold Chauveau; the beguiling *Kipling Jr.* (1995), which is animated, strangely, from photographed images of clay figures; and *Perspektivenbox* (1989), a flat-out explosion of multimedia surrealist esprit. Yamamura is a wonder who will, one hopes, follow the eye-gleam pathway suggested by his Kafka adaptation and make a feature already.

Discs: Sparkling transfers of very restless movies, with only an essay by Canadian J-film blogger Chris MaGee, who clarifies Yamamura's new place in the animation canon by mentioning the filmmaker's devotion to the work of Yuri Norstein and Pritt Parn. (MA)

Hammer & Tongs

The Hammer & Tongs Collection

Garth Jennings & Nick Goldsmith; UK 1998-2000; Optimum Home Entertainment/Region 2; Certificate TBC; 129 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.33:1; Features:

Swamp woman: 'La ciénaga'



NEW RELEASES

audio commentaries by directors and Graham Coxon, Vampire Weekend, Jarvis Cocker, Fatboy Slim, Gaz Coombes, Badly Drawn Boy, Adam Buxton, Par Wiksten, Róisín Murphy and Mark 'E' Everett

A Town Called Panic

Stéphane Aubier & Vincent Patar; Belgium/Luxembourg/France 2009; Optimum Home Entertainment/Region 2; Certificate PG; 74 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.78:1

Films: Along with *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (2005) and *Son of Rambow* (2007), Garth Jennings and Nick Goldsmith (aka Hammer & Tongs) have made quirky and engagingly original videos, initially for Britpop's finest, which form the bulk of this collection. What's novel are the endearingly candid phone chats with the musicians that make up the audio commentaries: "We rang up the artists because we don't really watch our work, and we don't talk about it." Thus we learn that Blur chose them because they weren't "arty buggers" and that Moloko's Róisín Murphy still doesn't love 'The Flipside'.

The 20-plus videos amply demonstrate the pair's enviable range and ingenuity, from the speeded-up larkabout of Vampire Weekend's 'A-Punk' to the technically astonishing nest of mini-narratives crammed into a single 20-second wideoshot in REM's 'Imitation of Life'. Their greatest hits

are filled with visual wit, notably the wandering milk carton of Blur's 'Coffee & TV', and the much copied amoeba-to-modern-man Darwinian parade of Fat Boy Slim's 'Right Here, Right Now', but Badly Drawn Boy's 'Spitting in the Wind' wrings a weird poignancy from Joan Collins's heartbroken diva. A hefty packet of home movies gives a good insight into the work behind the video-making, though the inclusion of only three early animated shorts by Jennings (including the manic *Toast the Cat*) gives this retrospective a slightly lopsided feel.

Hammer & Tong's taste for the loveably low-fi is also evident in their UK backing of *A Town Called Panic*, a timely and beautifully crafted stop-motion riposte to the current wave of shiny 3D animated spectacles. Belgian animators Stéphane Aubier and Vincent Patar's hit TV series has expanded into a deliriously zany kinetic fantasy starring Cowboy and Indian, two bumbling plastic figurines whose attempts to build a birthday barbecue for their long-suffering housemate Horse catapult all three of them into a series of slapstick adventures that span the globe – via a succession of gloriously intricate papier-mâché sets peppered with sly visual jokes. Endlessly inventive, the film fizzes with a manic busyness that nods at the filmmakers' admitted love of silent comedy as the hapless trio battle



Canadian beauty: Guy Maddin's 'Careful'

a giant robot penguin and a family of devious underwater mutants.

Moderating its somewhat shrill, episodic feel, however, is a plethora of surreal touches, ranging from hordes of kamikaze cows to a hesitant equine love affair. Shooting in widescreen gives it a lushly cinematic look, though its amiably anarchic narrative doesn't make an equally seamless big-screen transition.

Discs: Hammer & Tong's back catalogue scrubs up very nicely, and sports a hilarious interactive menu, practically a short in its own right. *A Town Called Panic* receives an almost edible transfer, full of densely saturated colours. While the snippets of interview with Aubier and Patar are informative about their earlier work and the influence on them of Tati, Keaton and Aardman, one wonders what happened to *La Fabrique de Panique*, the full-works 'making of' that was a highlight of the Region 1 release. (KS)

are strangely reminiscent of the East Cheam dwelling of Tony Hancock.) The cheeriness is disconcerting too. Julie Harris, who had already played Sally Bowles on stage, is a likeable but strangely wholesome presence to find in the Berlin demi-monde – she's no Dietrich. Meanwhile Harvey's Isherwood is smug and supercilious, his conceit of looking at other characters as though through a lens making him seem all the more aloof.

Disc: Minimal extras but a perfectly serviceable transfer. (GM) (MFB 262)

The Quintessential Guy Maddin

Archangel/Careful/Twilight of the Ice Nymphs/Dracula: Pages from a Virgin's Diary/Cowards Bend the Knee

Guy Maddin; Canada 1990/1992/1997/2003/2004; 90/100/91/73/60 minutes; Zeitgeist/Region 1 NTSC; Aspect Ratio 4:3/1.85:1; Features: multiple audio commentaries, behind-the-scenes footage, production artwork, radio interviews, TV news reports, set design documentary, personal-collection photographs, 'blueprints' from 'lost' Maddin feature, short films

I Am a Camera

Henry Cornelius; UK 1955; Park Circus/Region 2; Certificate 12; 100 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.33:1; Features: trailer, photo gallery

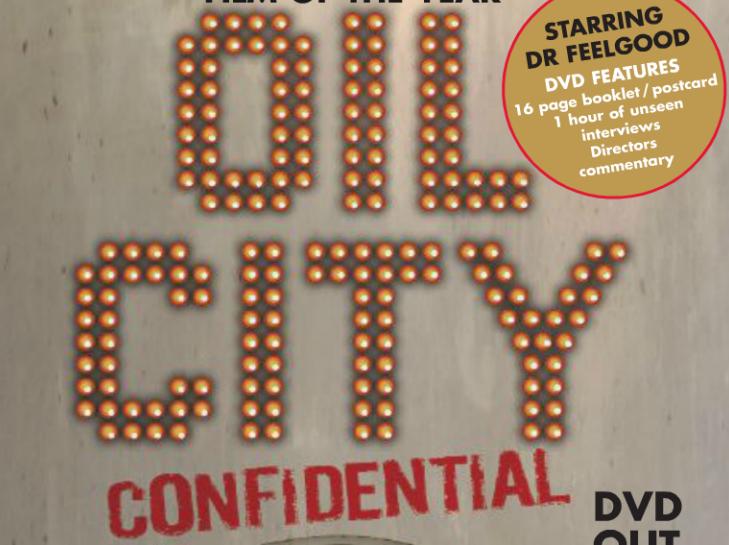
Film: Earlier in his career, the South African-born Cornelius made two well-observed and justly celebrated comedies, *Passport to Pimlico* (1949) and *Genevieve* (1953), and also produced some of the best Ealing films. It's surprising then that he makes such a mess of this drama based on Christopher Isherwood's Berlin stories – there's little here of the verve found in *Cabaret*, Bob Fosse's later musical foray into the same territory.

Laurence Harvey plays Isherwood, who is first seen as a successful and self-satisfied writer in post-war London. When he attends a launch party for a book by a certain Sally Bowles, the mention of her name provokes a flashback to early 1930s Germany, where he first met her. The portrayal of Berlin is resolutely unconvincing; try as he might, Cornelius can't capture the decadence of the city or the sense of anxiety about the rise of the Nazis, managing instead to make it seem like suburban London. (Isherwood's digs

are there may be no greater romance nowadays for the hardcore cinephile – the moviehead for whom cinema-ness is not merely a cultural obsession but a way of seeing life – than with the corpus of Guy Maddin, Winnipeg's almighty retro-meta-ironist and smoke-and-mirrors reinventor of the movies' melodramatic soul. You can't quite 'get' a Maddin film without being devoted to the medium's history and craziness and transformative power – the passion must come first. When it does, Maddin's films are blessings, as *Sight & Sound* readers probably know well, and this collected DVD set is an opportunity for full Maddin immersion. One can hope that *Zeitgeist* may come out with a 'Quintessential, Too' box including *Tales from the Gimli Hospital*, *Brand upon the Brain!*, *My Winnipeg* and another half dozen of Maddin's 20-odd other shorts. But for now you can submerge into the lost-talke Soviet daydream of *Archangel*, the Francophile-Alpine papier-mâché Walser-world of *Careful*, the Pixie-stick

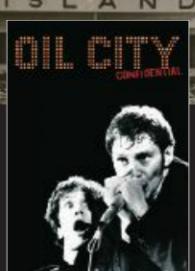
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netherland of *Twilight of the Ice Nymphs*, the gothic ballet camp of *Dracula: Pages from a Virgin's Diary* and the twisted autobio silent-psychodrama of *Cowards Bend the Knee*.

Fans need no persuading; for others, merely understand that Maddin's films – pulpily grave yet hilariously deadpan, intensely emotional yet absurd, comprised of little more than shadow and cardboard yet vividly visual, incestuously and farcically spliced with antique film modes and yet unmistakable as the contemporary work of one man – are *sui generis*, but they are movies at their movie-est. **Discs:** New and optimum transfers abound but it's the aggregation of supplements that makes the set must-have. All nearly-seven-hours of the commentaries (led by Maddin but including droll compatriots like screenwriter George Toles and producer Greg Klymkiw) are acidic and hilarious, the methodological material from Maddin's eccentric production process is fascinating, the shorts named above are justly famous (and foot to foot the match of any filmmaking happening in the western hemisphere), and the four 'Love Chaunt Workbooks' – silent sketch-edits for a film Maddin never made – are as plaintive in their fragmented way as the mythical-memoir trilogy that began with *Cowards*. (MA)

Man Hunt

Fritz Lang: US 1941; Optimum/Region 2; Certificate PG; 106 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.33:1; Features: trailer

Film: Fritz Lang's rip-roaring anti-Nazi thriller is in a similar vein to Alfred Hitchcock's *Foreign Correspondent* (released one year earlier). The screenplay, written by Dudley Nichols from Geoffrey Household's novel *Rogue Male*, combines the kind of escapist narrative you find in John Buchan yarns with an unflinching look at Nazi brutality.

This double edge is apparent right from the outset. Shortly before the war, Walter Pidgeon's big-game hunter Alan Thorndike turns up in the undergrowth outside Hitler's mountain retreat in Berchtesgaden, ready to shoot at the Führer. When captured, he claims that he never intended to pull the trigger, and that he was there just for the thrill of the chase. Nevertheless, he's brutally tortured by Hitler's henchmen on the orders of Gestapo officer Quive-Smith (a monocle-wearing George Sanders in purring villain mode), who wants Thorndike to confess that his attempt on Hitler's life was backed by the British government. The rest of the film is one long manhunt as Thorndike escapes back to Britain and is pursued by the Nazis every step of the way.

Lang brings style and ingenuity to predictable genre fare: the scenes of Thorndike being chased through the shadowy docks and London streets rekindle memories of the hunting down of Peter Lorre's child killer in Lang's earlier masterpiece *M* (1931). Joan Bennett's cockney accent is wildly

A night's tale

At long last, says Tom Charity, Charles Laughton's sinister Southern tale gets the DVD release it richly deserves

The Night of the Hunter

Charles Laughton; US 1955; Criterion Region 1 DVD/Region A Blu-ray; 93 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.66:1; Features: audio commentary, outtakes and behind-the-scenes footage, documentary, booklet, interview with Laughton's biographer Simon Callow, 'Moving Pictures' feature, 'Ed Sullivan Show' clip, interview with cinematographer Stanley Cortez, sketch gallery, theatrical trailer, video conversation between archivist Robert Gitt and critic Leonard Maltin

For years, this beguilingly sinister and heartfelt Southern gothic – the most singular in Hollywood history – was only available in a barebones MGM DVD in the wrong aspect ratio (it's 1.66:1). Criterion has put that right, and then some.

Although it's long since accrued the halo of a classic around these parts, it's worth remembering that in its day – 1955 – 'The Night of the Hunter' was seen as something of a stray dog. It was scary – except when it was laughable – and in his first film as director Charles Laughton lacked discipline. 'Variety' while allowing that the movie was "rich in promise", nevertheless suggested it might have been better served by "straight storytelling without the embellishments". 'Time' found it "garish, unbelievable, but fairly exciting", while 'The New Yorker' decided it was "alternately really artistic and dismally arty, with the latter... alas predominating". In Britain the reviews were if anything worse: "Confused and far from pleasant" ('Kinematograph Weekly'); "A horrible yarn... repulsive" ('Daily Mirror'); "A failure" (the 'Times').

Trust François Truffaut to see it more clearly, even if he complained about "failures of style": "It's like a horrifying news item retold by small children," he said. "The film runs counter to the rules



BFI STILLS, POSTERS AND DESIGNS (2)

Let us prey: Robert Mitchum in 'The Night of the Hunter'

of commercialism; it will probably be Laughton's single experience as a director. It's a pity... Laughton isn't afraid to knock over a few red lights and some traffic cops in his unusual film. It makes us fall in love again with an experimental cinema that truly experiments."

Neither the critics nor the public cared for the sight of Robert Mitchum's crazed preacher chasing after two young children – he knows they know where their dead daddy hid a stash of stolen money – and slaying their mother to get ahold of them. A morality tale that was also about the evils of sexual repression, the story was probably too near the knuckle for its time, though Davis Grubb's rich, Faulknerian novel was a bestseller. But it was Laughton's decision to resurrect the antiquated styles of silent cinema that truly bewildered his contemporaries – even Truffaut, who

didn't like to see Griffith's sentiment slammed up against Germanic expressionism so brusquely.

The Criterion edition almost goes overboard with its copious attention to the film's production – but then it was an extraordinary shoot in so many ways. There's an audio commentary (featuring second unit director Terry Sanders, critic F.X. Feeney, archivist Robert Gitt and author Preston Neal Jones), a 37-minute documentary featuring producer Paul Gregory, author Jeffrey Couchman and many of the above; an interview with Laughton biographer Simon Callow; a 15-minute piece from the BBC's 'Moving Pictures'; a 13-minute interview with cinematographer Stanley Cortez for French TV; a clip in which Shelley Winters and Peter Graves act out a scene from the story (not in the film) for 'The Ed Sullivan Show'; and a gallery of sketches Davis Grubb sent to Laughton.

A second disc is given over entirely to 'Charles Laughton Directs The Night of the Hunter', a two-hour-plus compilation of outtakes prepared by Robert Gitt for the UCLA film archive that has screened occasionally at festivals over the past decade. Gitt in effect recreates the film through Laughton's rejected takes, a rare privilege, not least because Laughton thought nothing of giving his actors line readings even as the cameras rolled. It's as if we're on the set with Mitchum et al.

Truffaut was right: Laughton never directed another film. But there's a great irony here, as Simon Callow perplexedly acknowledges: almost no one under the age of 35 now knows Laughton as an actor. Yet this terrifying, innocent film remains a touchstone. It's one for the ages.



Charles Laughton directs Robert Mitchum and Peter Graves

Under the influence

Tim Lucas is finally won over by Guillermo del Toro's remarkable debut 'Cronos' – hand-me-down horrors and all

Cronos

Guillermo del Toro; Mexico 1993; Criterion/Region 1; 92 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.78:1; Features: optional Spanish voiceover introduction, audio commentaries by del Toro and his producers, video interviews with five principals, a video tour of del Toro's 'Bleak House' offices, US trailer, stills gallery, 'Geometria' (1987 horror short by del Toro with video interview), 42-page booklet containing essay by Maitland McDonagh and excerpts from del Toro's notes for the film

The greatest challenge facing any critic writing about the films of Guillermo del Toro is that, since he began recording audio commentaries for his work, the Mexican director has established himself as his own most thoughtful, insightful and exhaustive critic. He is somehow able to look at his creations with both passion and objectivity, and even when he's speaking in English (his second language) his vocabulary is expansive and precise, casually gathering words such as 'homeopathic' and 'totemic' even in a conversational tense, while always maintaining a sense of humour and warm approachability. His wit and intelligence also combine to coin useful new English terms such as 'eye protein' – that more nutritious complement to Hollywood's contemporary main course, 'eye candy'. And yet the most generous yield of his self-awareness may be the sense of perspective he brings to his self-criticism, which is perhaps more useful when applied to his directorial debut 'Cronos' than to any of his other films.

'Cronos' is the story of an ageing antiquarian, Jésus Gris (Federico Luppi), devoted to his orphaned granddaughter Aurora (Tamara Shanath), who discovers inside an ancient statue's base an object like a Fabergé egg which attaches painfully to his hand and – unbeknown to him – fuels him with the juice of the immortal slug-like insect living inside it. He uses it blindly, not having access to the user's manual designed by its creator, the 16th-century alchemist Fulcanelli; this is in the hands of a dying millionaire (Claudio Brook of 'Simon of the Desert') whose American gangster nephew Angel de la Guardia (future Hellboy Ron Perlman) is ordered to retrieve it from Gris, who has been rejuvenated at the cost of a new appetite for human blood. Though made with a mature grasp of craftsmanship, and possessed of beautiful cinematography and strong performances, 'Cronos' is very much a young man's film, which is both its fault and its charm. The character names are



Toy story: Tamara Shanath and Federico Luppi in 'Cronos'

too baldly symbolic, and there is not enough bite in the sweetness of the relationship between the young girl and her grandfather; but when we see Aurora convert her toy chest into a day bed for her vampiric abuelo, and the lid closes on the image of this monster cuddling with two smiling toy companions, there's no mistaking that we're in the presence of an important new voice in filmmaking.

Seeing 'Cronos' again for the first time since discovering del Toro in the mid-1990s, I couldn't help but see it not as the highly original work most commonly lauded, but as a remarkable repository of influences. Anyone well schooled in genre cinema should be able to look at 'Cronos' and see the ghost image of the Lament Configuration puzzle box from Clive Barker's 'Hellraiser' superimposed over the Cronos device, or discern various biological and biomechanical horrors culled from any number of David Cronenberg films, or identify – by content or emotional resonance alone – parallels to scenes in Paul Morrissey's 'Blood for Dracula' (the pathetic vampire lapping blood from the floor), Terence Fisher's 'Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed' (the thought-to-be-dead man reaching out to a widow who can't recognise him), or even Orson Welles' 'The Stranger' (the climax set high above the street in front of a giant clock face). It employs as a character the alchemist Fulcanelli, also central to the mythos of Dario Argento's 'Inferno' and Michele Soavi's Argento-produced 'The Church'. There is something in the critical

mind (at least mine) that notes such accumulations of second-hand material as laziness, convenience and unoriginality, no matter how brilliantly assimilated they may be. And yet del Toro disarmed my reservations at once when, in one of his on-camera interviews in this deluxe Criterion offering, he rationally states that because 'Cronos' was his first film, it is "a kind of exploded view of my brain". In the interview, he then proceeds to guide us on a delightful 10-minute tour of Bleak House, the curiosity museum 'man cave' housing his lifetime of collecting – an even truer exploded view of his brain. The parsimonious critic has no recourse but to look at the film again, not as derivative, but as an immense summoning of love for the maestri of his chosen genre. It would take a harder heart than mine to recognise Aurora's concealment of the Cronos device inside her teddy bear as a reference to 'The Night of the Hunter' and claim that it doesn't sweeten the storytelling.

The definitive audio commentaries included in Criterion's single-disc set (available in SD and Blu-ray) have been ported over from Lionsgate's 10th anniversary DVD of 2004, but many new extras are also included and the feature presentation, a new and meticulously cleaned HD transfer from the original camera negative, is magnificent. Roughly 45 minutes of informative video interviews with del Toro, his gifted cinematographer Guillermo Navarro and actors Perlman and Luppi are included, along with a choice example of del Toro juvenilia, 'Geometria'. Loosely based on Frederic Brown's story 'Zero in Geometry', it's an anecdotal story staged with Italian horror trimmings, and quite grisly – but most notable for its sense of whimsy, with the young del Toro himself dubbing all the characters in Italian. The stills gallery, courtesy of del Toro, is so thorough about every facet of production that he proves his own best archaeologist as well.

Del Toro rationally states that because 'Cronos' was his first film, it is 'a kind of exploded view of my brain'

NEW RELEASES

◀ askew but she's affecting as the street girl who takes pity on the hunted man. **Disc:** Regrettably there are no extras beyond the trailer. This is one of Lang's most underrated films and it's a pity that Optimum hasn't been able to provide any notes or contextual material. (GM)

Middletown

Peter Davis et al; US 1982; Icarus/Region 1 NTSC; 457 minutes; Aspect Ratio 4:3; Features: booklet

Films: *Hearts & Minds* director Peter Davis began this Public Broadcasting mega-project a few years after his 'Nam documentary's Oscar, and six years later ended up with an epic portrait of America's 'middle' municipality – Muncie, Indiana – an average small city smack in the centre of the country that happened to be designated as prototypical in 1929, when sociologists Robert and Helen Lynd published the book *Middletown: A Study in Contemporary American Culture*. The 1970s being what they were, it wouldn't be odd to assume that Davis came to town sceptical of the idyllic fabulousness of Middle American life, or that out of everything he and his team of filmmakers (including doc vet Richard Leacock) filmed they ended up emphasising the dramatic and the socially piquant simply because it was interesting. But whatever the reason, *Middletown* ends up being a dire vision, in which generational tension, economic struggle and endemic dissatisfaction ("Shit-town, that's what it is," grumbles one industrial-development-plagued homeowner) boil relentlessly under the town's every friendly surface. Seven independent sections train in on everything from a mayoral campaign to a crucial high-school basketball game, weddings, family life, churchgoing, small-business work and teenage issues, and the approach is standard, interviewing occasionally but mostly just hanging back and observing in the classic 'direct cinema' tradition.

The accumulative negative thrust caught *Middletown* a measure of criticism at the time; one powerful section, 'Seventeen', was effectively censored by the PBS for its frank portrait of adolescent rebelliousness and was released as a standalone film to theatres.

Today, free from the demanding pretension of being somehow representative of an entire national culture and depicting rather just a specific time and place, the films are compelling and eloquent, and do in fact reveal great skeins of character in the American psyche, many of which perplex us to this day. (Much of American reactionary politics stands as an effort to return to the perfect temperate Middle America that Muncie was supposed to be but clearly wasn't.) In his accompanying essay, Davis discusses how much "wanting" he sees in *Middletown* now, and he's right – every layer of society is caught in a state of anxious, frustrated desire, which itself is as astute a cultural

diagnosis as any film has ever made, even if it wasn't intentional.

Discs: *Middletown* is the sort of project that's been waiting for the DVD format; it is its own supplements, and the individual, thematically focused sections can be watched in any order. Roughly shot film perfectly presented. (MA)

Pinter's Progress & The Homecoming

Philip Saville/Peter Hall; US/UK 2009/1973; Fremantle/Region 0; Certificate 12; 256 minutes total; Aspect Ratio 16:9 anamorphic; Features: interviews, stills and poster galleries, article reprints

Films: Although clearly intended as a tribute to the late Nobel laureate, what's most striking about this pairing of Peter Hall's film adaptation of Pinter's most important mid-1960s play and his former colleague Philip Saville's posthumous documentary about his early years is how effectively it rehabilitates the reputation of the playwright's first wife Vivien Merchant by providing ample evidence to support the contention that she was his primary muse throughout his first creative decade. She's riveting in *The Homecoming* in the role she created, as the only woman in a house otherwise packed with testosterone in the form of her husband's family. Hall doesn't bother disguising the piece's stage origins, and opening it out would arguably have done it a disservice by diluting the almost intolerably oppressive atmosphere of a reluctant family gathering, where single words (or well-timed pauses) cut like a Stanley knife in a darkened alley.

Disc: An excellent transfer from a well-preserved print: the desaturated colours seem true to the source. Substantial illustrated interviews with Peter Hall, cinematographer David Watkin, executive producer Otto Plaschkes (who also discusses Pinter's directorial debut *Butley*), an onstage introduction by film programmer Richard Peña at the film's 2002 revival, a stills gallery and reprints of various articles by and about Pinter round off an impressive package. (MFB 505) (MB)

Shed Your Tears and Walk Away

Jez Lewis; UK 2009; Drakes Avenue/Region 2; Certificate 15; 88 minutes; Aspect Ratio 16:9; Features: Nick Broomfield and Jez Lewis interview

Film: Jez Lewis's patient and probing film sees him returning to Hebden Bridge in Yorkshire, where he grew up, and reconnecting with childhood friends. What he finds is a town whose youngsters seem to have given up on life. The toll is dismaying: some have committed suicide, others are drug addicts and alcoholics. Lewis's old pal Cass – someone Lewis remembers as charismatic and athletic – now spends his days swigging Special Brew; he's been told he's two years away from death. So what's gone wrong?

Certain theories are advanced by interviewees. Incomers have 'colonised' the community, buying up the houses



La signora di tutti The charting of film star Gaby Doriot's rise and fall anticipates the similarly flashback-driven 'Citizen Kane' by nearly a decade

that locals can no longer afford and taking control of school committees. Cass talks about an abusive stepfather. Others, too, have been let down by their parents' generation. They're a forlorn and lost bunch, but also personable and articulate – though their deadpan Yorkshire humour can't disguise their desperate plight.

Lewis is the one who escaped – it's a familiar enough story. Indeed at times *Shed Your Tears* brings to mind Fellini's *I vitelloni* (1953), with its account of youngsters trapped in a hometown where they have no opportunities and from which few ever manage to escape.

Disc: The sole extra is an interview between Lewis and his executive producer Nick Broomfield, whom he credits with persuading him to make this film. Initially, Lewis considered the idea 'too much of a can of worms'; even when he started filming he thought he was making a 15-minute journalistic piece, but gradually the project snowballed. (GM)

La signora di tutti

Max Ophuls; Italy 1934; Eureka/Masters of Cinema/Region 0; Certificate PG; 86 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.33:1; Features: Tag Gallagher video essay 'So Alone...' (30 minutes), 44-page booklet including essay by Luc Moullet

Film: Watching Ophuls's second masterpiece (after *Liebelei*) some 76 years on, what's most startling is how modern it seems. It's an Italian production with synchronised sound, whose camera movements have a fluidity that defies the technology of the time, and whose charting of film star

Pipe show: Jacques Tati as Monsieur Hulot

highlights the limitations of the audio commentary format by offering close, graphically augmented analysis of individual scenes (sometimes alongside similar clips from other Ophuls films) as well as a wealth of background detail, not least the parallels between Gaby's fictional career and Isa Miranda's subsequent relationship with real-life Svengali Angelo Rizzoli. The 44-page booklet offers a lengthy essay by Luc Moullet, a reminiscence by Miranda about Ophuls's sometimes cruel methods, and a dossier of shorter oral recollections. (MFB 584) (MB)

Films by Jacques Tati

Les Vacances de M. Hulot

France 1953/1978; BFI DVD/Region B Blu-ray/Region 2 DVD; Certificate U; 88 minutes (restored 1978 re-edit), 95 minutes (1953 original release version); Aspect Ratio 1.33:1; Features: dual-format edition with both versions of the feature on both discs, trailer, Richard Lester interview, essay and biographical notes by Philip Kemp

Playtime

France 1967; BFI DVD/Region B Blu-ray/Region 2 DVD; Certificate U; 124 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.85:1; Features: dual-format edition, trailer, short making-of and biographical documentaries, commentary by Philip Kemp, audio highlights from Tati's onstage interview at the NFT in 1968, essays by David Furnham and Kevin Brownlow

Films: At first glance, these two very different titles would seem to represent the twin poles of Jacques Tati's achievement as performer and filmmaker. In 1953 *Les Vacances de M. Hulot* introduced the world to his signature turn, the gangling, accident-prone pipe-smoker whose irrepressible curiosity unleashes unwitting chaos. Grounded in fleet footwork and a bouncy angled-forward walk, Tati's performance obviously draws on his skills as a music-hall mime, and suddenly early 1950s Brittany doesn't seem so far away from the world of the great Hollywood silent clowns, as the gags keep coming. Still, the film's rhythm of set-up and payoff can seem rather short-termist when set beside the controlled unfolding of events in 1967's *Playtime*, the *folie de grandeur* that bankrupted Tati, cost him his career and has long been regarded as his masterpiece. Shooting in 70mm widescreen and creating a clinically elegant modern city of steel and glass on huge sets,

Tati here makes the Hulot figure just one element in the overall fresco, pitting human foibles against the pre-packaged brave new world of contemporary design. With its radical storytelling, which favours ensemble interaction over linear narrative, its big themes and mastery of cinematic resources, Tati's directorial achievement here amply rewards multiple viewings. Oddly, however, watching at home in these museum-quality



presentations somehow affects one's experience of the films themselves, bringing their thematic consistency to light. Seen in the theatre with an audience, the laughter makes them more about communal recognition, yet in a domestic context the films' underlying bleakness strangely becomes more evident. The hotel lounge and beach activity in *Les Vacances* may be on a smaller scale but, just like the tourists shunted around the cityscapes of *Playtime*, the film's characters are trapped in the social rituals of leisure and entertainment yet find only fleeting moments of human connection. Hulot himself is a kindly soul but his seems a life of romantic disappointments, missed connections and solitude masked by bustling activity. Instead of seeming like twin poles of Tati's artistry, both films now appear a fundamental reflection of the actor-director's own habitual status as distanced observer, amused by humanity's peccadilloes yet forever a man apart. Are we having fun yet?

Discs: Anyone still unconvinced of the merits of Blu-ray should do an A/B comparison with the *Playtime* discs of the BFI's handsome new dual-format editions: the higher resolution captures every glint on the sheeny surfaces, while neon signs pop vividly out of the steely grey palette, and the extra detail on view allows us to pick up everything right to the back of Tati's densely populated frames. The standard definition disc, by comparison, lacks the same life and precision. With both films, the useful background extras are split across the formats. (T)

Also released

Black Orpheus

Marcel Camus; Brazil 1959; Criterion/Region 1 DVD; 107 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.33:1; Features: optional English-dubbed soundtrack, archival interviews with Marcel Camus and actress Marpessa Dawn, 'Looking for Black Orpheus' documentary, booklet with essay by 'S&S' contributor Michael Atkinson

Shogun Assassin

Robert Houston; Japan/US 1980; Eureka/Region 2 DVD/Region B Blu-ray; Certificate 18; 85 minutes; Aspect Ratio 2.35:1; Features: video appreciation by Samuel L. Jackson, two commentary tracks, original theatrical trailers

The Thin Red Line

Andrew Merton; US 1964; Optimum/Region 2; Certificate 15; 95 minutes; Aspect Ratio 2.35:1

This month's DVD releases
reviewed by Sergio Angelini,
Michael Atkinson, Michael
Brooke, Trevor Johnston,
Geoffrey Macnab and
Kate Stables

Reviews in *Monthly Film Bulletin* and
Sight & Sound are cited in parentheses

A Dance to the Music of Time

Top Table Productions/Channel 4; UK 1997; Acorn Media/Region 2; 413 minutes; Certificate 15; Aspect Ratio 14:9 anamorphic

Programme: Adapting Anthony Powell's 12-volume roman à clef *A Dance to the Music of Time* for television with any degree of fidelity was always going to be a bit of a poisoned chalice for anyone prepared to take up the challenge. On top of its vast panoply of characters and gargantuan length (a million words, give or take) comes the sheer structural difficulty of maintaining viewer interest without dispensing with the author's reliance on coincidence and chance as an organising principle within a standard episodic format. Dennis Potter was the first to make the attempt, with an ambitious plan for a series of a dozen 90-minute plays; sadly this went unrealised following his epic spat with the BBC in the late 1970s.

Eventually, after another failed attempt, this time by Ken Taylor, it was producer-director Alvin Rakoff and playwright Hugh Whitemore who got a version on to the screen, but with considerable sacrifices made along the way to accommodate Channel 4's paltry allocation of eight hours (including adverts). What emerges from this process of condensation is a palimpsest of the original, one cruelly denuded of its Proustian aspirations, as literally signalled by the opening in which Nicholas Jenkins (dashing James Purefoy), Powell's authorial proxy, goes to his girlfriend's house, where she greets him at the door completely undressed. For the following 100 minutes, as he recounts ironic anecdotes about his family and friends, she (a roseate Claire Skinner) listens quietly, patiently, naked and yet, emotionally, unexposed and unmoved.

The serial is similarly lovely to look at but also detached and disconnected, hurtling forwards at such speed that the succession of comic characters and dramatic incidents (political assassination, suicide, necrophilia, hot and cold wars) barely have a chance to register, let alone leave an impression. Watching this presentation is like the televisual equivalent of being asked to lie back and think of England – a passionless encounter in a vast chamber full of fascinatingly ornate bric-a-brac that's always just out of reach. The overall lack of involvement with the characters and their fates isn't helped by having some of the parts played by actors of different ages as the story progresses – Jenkins for instance is portrayed by three actors, most notably John Standing in the closing instalment – while others become increasingly unrecognisable under unconvincing sheaths of latex.

What ultimately elevates the proceedings is Simon Russell Beale's portrayal of the pompous, ridiculous, tragic and utterly unforgettable Kenneth Widmerpool. From our first



A Dance to the Music of Time As tragic Kenneth Widmerpool, Simon Russell Beale emerges as the glue that holds the piece together

encounter in his late teens, huffing and puffing across a Cambridge field, to his pantheistic farewell nearly five decades later, Beale's is an utterly entrancing performance. As one of the only actors to play his role convincingly all the way through, he emerges as the glue that holds the piece together as we wait to share the latest of his increasingly perverse humiliations.

Discs: The anamorphic transfer and two-channel stereo are well up to par. (SA)

Ellery Queen

Fairmont-Foxcroft/Universal/NBC; US 1975-76; Madman Video/Region 4; 1,300 minutes; Certificate PG; Aspect Ratio 4:3; Features: 'Don't Look Behind You' TV movie, William Link interview, 'Too Many Suspects' feature-length pilot, booklet

Programme: In 1929, two cousins from New York, Frederic Dannay and Manfred B. Lee, created 'Ellery Queen', a mystery novelist who helps his NYPD inspector father to solve crimes (the cousins also used the Ellery Queen name as their joint pseudonym).

Often prizes ingenuity above all things, Dannay and Lee's complexly plotted novels provide formalist experiments of dazzling inventiveness: their second book has a 30-page summing-up, with the killer's name reserved for the last two words of the story; their final effort, published 40 years later, uses the killer's name only twice in the entire text. Their protagonist went on to become a genuine multimedia star, featuring in

movies, comic strips, radio shows and several television series. By the time Jim Hutton came to the role in 1975, he was the tenth onscreen incarnation of the character, a little softer around the edges than previous versions and less of a towering intellectual snob.

Riding high after their back-to-back successes with *Mannix* and *Colombo*, writer-producers Richard Levinson and William Link crafted a highly entertaining, subtly postmodern valentine to the 1940s heyday of the softboiled detective, even retaining Dannay and Lee's 'Challenge to the Reader' in which Ellery breaks the fourth wall to see if audiences have guessed whodunit yet. The plots are always clever and the cast of Hollywood venerables, including Ida Lupino, Dana Andrews, Joan Collins, Ray Milland and Vincent Price (as the harried director of an 'Ellery Queen' movie), provide great nostalgia value, while David Wayne routinely steals the show as the acidic inspector.

Discs: The episodes are uncut (the 'Match Wits with Ellery Queen' pre-credit teasers remain) and images are sharp and colourful. Extras include an affectionate if occasionally unreliable onscreen memoir by Link, and the feature-length 'Don't Look Behind You', an earlier attempt by Levinson and Link to adapt a Queen novel from which they removed their names (using their 'Ted Leighton' pseudonym instead) after it was rewritten to accommodate the hilarious miscasting of Peter Lawford as the intellectual super-sleuth. (SA)

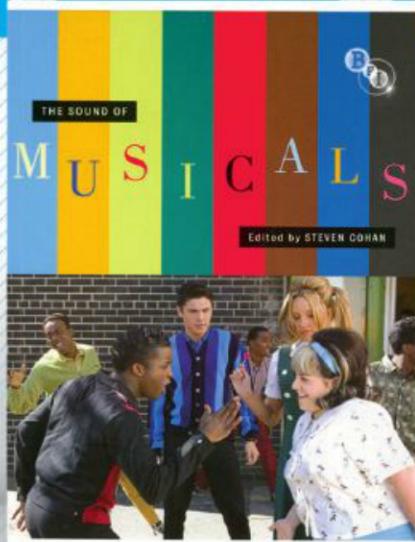
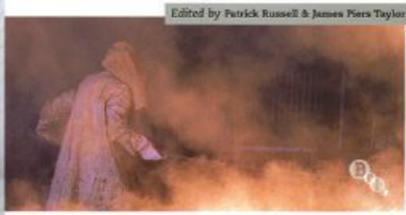
Read



Shadows of Progress

DOCUMENTARY FILM IN POST-WAR BRITAIN

Edited by Patrick Russell & James Piers Taylor



The Sound of Musicals

By Steven Cohan, BFI/Palgrave Macmillan, 232pp, paperback, £9.99, ISBN 9781844573462

From the ever popular classic *The Sound of Music* to the recent rise of *High School Musical* and the television series *Glee*, everyone has a favourite. This new, richly illustrated publication explores the key issues, traditions, stars and films of one of the public's most loved film genres. Featuring 16 original essays by leading international scholars, this illuminating collection addresses the complex history and global variety of the movie musical, and considers the delight and passionate engagement that musicals continue to inspire in audiences around the world.

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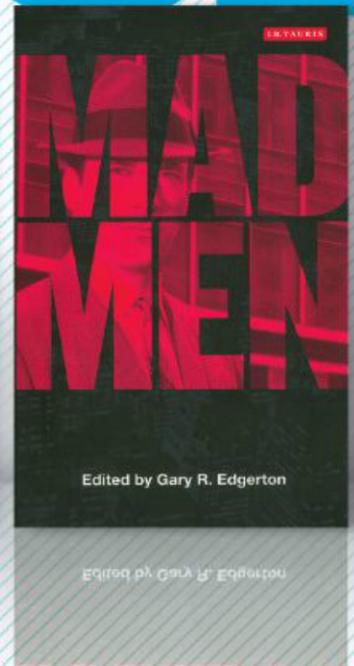


Shoah

By Sue Vice, BFI/Palgrave Macmillan, 100pp, paperback, £9.99, ISBN 9781844573257

In this insightful study, Sue Vice explores *Shoah* both as cinema and as an example of Holocaust representation. In addition, the author follows director Claude Lanzmann's declaration that "Shoah is a fight against generalities" in emphasising the importance of the detail in both dialogue and filmic technique. Vice uses close readings of some of the film's interviews to explore the background to the film, the difficulties in its financing and production, and the long process of editing that led to Lanzmann's realisation that "the subject of my film is death itself – death and not survival."

www.palgrave.com/bfi



Mad Men: Dream Come True TV

Edited by Gary R. Edgerton, I.B. Tauris, 304pp, paperback, £12.99, ISBN 9781848853799

Don and Betty Draper live in a picture-perfect world. He is a hard-living advertising executive – a "mad man" – on the fast track. She's a Bryn Mawr graduate and former fashion model, now a suburban princess, mother of three children. If they've got everything, why are they so unhappy? Why is their dream come true not enough? This book explores, analyses and celebrates the world of *Mad Men* in all its aspects, and includes an interview with its executive producer, Scott Hornbacher, and an episode guide.

www.ibtauris.com

Shadows of Progress: Documentary Film in Post-War Britain

Edited by Patrick Russell and James Piers Taylor, BFI/Palgrave Macmillan, 448pp, paperback, £19.99, ISBN 9781844573219

The received wisdom is that British documentary went into decline after the war, resurrected only by Free Cinema and the arrival of TV documentary. *Shadows of Progress* demolishes these assumptions, presenting instead a complex picture of the sponsored documentary in flux. The book explores the reasons for the period's critical neglect, and addresses the production, distribution and key themes of British documentary. It also provides career biographies of key filmmakers of the period, from Lindsay Anderson to neglected figures such as John Krish, Sarah Erulkar and Eric Marquis.

www.palgrave.com/bfi

The world of Ray

Philip Kemp welcomes two contrasting studies of the great Indian director Satyajit Ray

The Apu Trilogy: Satyajit Ray and the Making of an Epic

By Andrew Robinson, I.B. Tauris, 224pp, £12.99, ISBN 9781848855168

Cinema, Emergence and the Films of Satyajit Ray

By Keya Ganguly, University of California Press, 274pp, £16.95, ISBN 9780520262171

In 1980 the Indian actress turned MP Nargis Dutt, star of the 1957 Bollywood classic 'Mother India', launched an attack in parliament on Satyajit Ray, accusing him of distorting the image of India and damaging the country's reputation. She repeated her attack in a magazine interview, claiming that Ray portrayed "a region of West Bengal which is so poor that it does not represent India's poverty in its true form", and pandered to foreigners who "want to see India in an abject condition". Ray, she added, should be showing "Modern India", by which she apparently meant "dams".

The inanity of Dutt's comments – apart from anything else, she seems not to have noticed that 'Pather Panchali' (1955), the film she chiefly had in mind, is set in the 1910s – was predictably mocked by Ray's supporters. (Ray himself, with his usual dignity, didn't trouble to respond.) But her remarks, though ludicrous, are indicative of a strangely persistent trend in discussions of Ray's work, whether by his supporters or his critics: that although he made nearly 30 features (plus a batch of documentaries), many of them of exceptional sophistication and complexity, attention always seems to focus on the very outset of his career, when he was still finding his way as a filmmaker – on the Apu trilogy, and on 'Pather Panchali' in particular. It's an odd perspective, as though we should always view Kurosawa's work through the prism of 'Judo Saga', or Renoir through 'La Fille de l'eau'.

Both Andrew Robinson and Keya Ganguly cite the Nargis Dutt interview, Robinson in his final chapter on 'The Trilogy and Ray today', and Ganguly at the outset of her book. Robinson has written more extensively on Ray than any other English-language writer, and his new book is an expansion and elaboration of the chapters on the trilogy in his definitive study of Ray's work and career, 'Satyajit Ray: The Inner Eye'. Ganguly casts her net wider, and writes with a more specific aim: to consider Ray's films "in terms of the avant-garde".

The story of the making of the trilogy has often been told, not least by Ray himself: how a young man with a deep



Modernist or traditionalist?: with no filmmaking training, Ray found his own style

love of cinema but no filmmaking training whatever – aided by a group of equally inexperienced friends, and with such exiguous funding that they had to haul the rented equipment to their locations on public transport – succeeded against all the odds in making a film that forever changed the international image of Indian cinema, and then followed it up with two sequels of equal stature; how Ray drew from his actors – most of them non-professionals, few of whom had appeared before a movie camera before – performances of astonishing naturalism and truth.

Robinson tells the tale with warmth, lucidity and a wealth of detail. He quotes an illuminating letter Ray wrote in 1950 to his friend Bansi Chandragupta (who would become his lifelong art director), enthusing over De Sica's 'Bicycle Thieves' before adding: "If your theme is strong and simple, then you can include a hundred little apparently irrelevant details which, instead of obscuring

the theme, only help to intensify it by contrast, and in addition create the illusion of reality better." This, in a nutshell, is the method behind the Apu trilogy, and indeed all Ray's work. In his final chapter, Robinson contrasts the compassionate subtlety of the trilogy with Danny Boyle's "crass and exploitative" 'Slumdog Millionaire', a film that "reveals luridly in the desperate slum poverty of Bombay".

Keya Ganguly has a rather different agenda. Singling out six of Ray's films for particular attention – 'Ghare Baire' (1984), 'Charulata' (1964), 'Davi' (1960), 'Jalsaghar' (1958), 'Mahanagar' (1963) and the concluding film of the trilogy, 'Apur Sansar' (1958) – she sets out to establish Ray's credentials as a modernist and a member of the cinematic avant garde. It's an unconventional view – most critics would probably consider Ray a traditionalist in terms of cinematic technique; but she argues her case well, if sometimes in overly academic language, presenting several facets of his work in a convincing new light. Both she and Andrew Robinson succeed in doing what all good critical writing about cinema should do: they make us want to go back and watch the films again, with new eyes.

He contrasts the subtlety of the trilogy with the 'crass' Slumdog Millionaire

FURTHER READING

100 Animated Feature Films

By Andrew Osmond,
BFI/Palgrave Macmillan, 246pp, £20,
ISBN 9781844573400

The year (or so) of *Avatar* and *The Illusionist*, two films that ballyhoo the art of the new and mourn the old, seems a good moment to wrap hard covers around a survey of the animated feature. *S&S* contributor Andrew Osmond's upsized contribution to the BFI Screen Guides series intersperses full-colour pics with briefly essayed A-Y recommendations – ending on *Yellow Submarine*. "The animated feature film is one of the most unruly changelings in cinema," Osmond writes in his introduction, sketching a history of its escape from the confines of Disney and children's cartoon associations to a form that can encompass anime sci-fi, Czech puppet surrealism, cel-animated studies of Israeli war guilt (*Waltz with Bashir*) and one-woman computer mash-ups of 1930s blues, modern romance and the *Ramayana* (*Sita Sings the Blues*, 2008).

Features, of course, are far from the whole of animation (so there's no Chuck Jones, Tex Avery or Brothers Quay, while the Russians are represented only by Ivan Ivanov-Vano's two versions of *Ivan and His Magic Pony*). I wanted Osmond to elaborate on his by-the-by insinuation that the animated feature form "may have been stunted by the world's most powerful studios – Disney, Pixar, Ghibli, DreamWorks."

The list itself is deliberately Western populist. Half the titles are from the USA, including 15 Disneys and six Pixars, and nearly another quarter from Japan, the focus being on "films that the Anglophone viewer can see fairly easily with a multiregion DVD player". A few choices feel forced (he doesn't seem much to like *Up*). You can feel him enjoying the expanded contextual histories introducing the less familiar films (from 1917's lost Argentinian *El Apóstol*, likely the first animated feature, to the Norwegian Ivo Caprino's 1975 *Pinchcliffe Grand Prix*).

Osmond's good on making connections between his entries, and particularly sharp on gender readings, be it the "essentialism" of *Wall-E* or the "looking-glass recursion" of *Beauty and the Beast* (1991). And he's generous enough to recommend deeper tomes, though you don't have to agree that "this book is a skewed and partial appreciation of the medium" – just a usefully indicative one.

♦ Nick Bradshaw



Essentialist: 'Wall-E'

Goodbye Cinema, Hello Cinephilia: Film Culture in Transition

By Jonathan Rosenbaum,
University of Chicago Press, 376pp, £16,
ISBN 9780226726656

When he bowed out as film critic on the *Chicago Reader* in 2008, Jonathan Rosenbaum gave a valedictory interview on the paper's website in which he said that there was a great advantage to retirement: he would have more time to watch films. Many jaded members of his profession, you suspect, would find something deeply perverse about such tireless enthusiasm. But for Rosenbaum cinephilia is more than just an appetite or a passion, it is an attitude to the world. His latest collection emerges from an intelligence that is profoundly committed to watching films, and reflecting on them, in an intensely engaged way – and I mean 'engaged' in its true political sense.

The central premise of Rosenbaum's book, stated in the title essay, is that, at a time when modes of film viewing are changing so drastically, one could easily be pessimistic about the future of film culture; and yet, Rosenbaum contends, there is every reason to be positive, even utopian. With the increased availability of long-inaccessible titles on DVD and online, a new cinephilia has evolved. The explosion of online discussion means that film can be debated more widely and immediately, and new communities formed – not least political ones, as in the vigorous culture of dissident documentary that emerged during the Bush years. In place of the old model of cinema as movies projected on screens, Rosenbaum



Eclectic cinephilia: Jia Zhangke's 'The World' is usefully compared to Tati's 'Playtime'

proposes a larger picture of cinephilia, seen "less as a specialized interest than as a certain kind of necessity – an activity making possible things that would otherwise be impossible".

Culled from various sources – print, online, academic papers – and ranging from the early 1970s to his very recent writing, this new collection displays Rosenbaum's passions for exegesis, advocacy and, indeed, the cataloguing of cinema's rare birds. Included are espousals of several filmmakers overlooked by canonical film history – among them Eduardo de Gregorio, Sara Driver and the veteran Catalan experimentalist Pere Portabella. Another is an exemplary outsider, French critic and filmmaker Luc

Mouillet, whose defiantly artisanal comedies and crypto-documentaries prompt Rosenbaum to make his most passionate declaration, a manifesto-like 'Invocation' inveighing against "our enslavement to production values".

The theme of a new cinephilia, active and critical, runs through the collection, including the closing piece on Thom Andersen's *Los Angeles Plays Itself* (2003), a documentary essay in which the activities of film watching, filmmaking and criticism converge almost perfectly. Key words throughout the book are "intelligence" (a quality Rosenbaum defends where it is often ignored, in Charlie Chaplin and Marilyn Monroe) and "community" – which especially comes into play in an inspired

comparison of Jacques Tati's *Playtime* (1967) and Jia Zhangke's *The World* (2004) as depictions of monumental dystopias. Key pieces include a 'trailer' written in 1997 for Godard's *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, then still a work in progress; here Rosenbaum provides an insightful introduction to a project that proposed a new visual grammar for thinking about cinema, history and the world. The several explicitly political pieces include 'Bushwhacked Cinema', about American cinema and oppositional voices in the Dubya era, and 'What Dope Does to Movies', an entertaining and provocative account of how 1960s drug consumption, and the communities it spawned, redefined cinema – for better or worse – as an "art of the present tense".

Rosenbaum's obsessiveness and the habit of writing long online pieces mean that he isn't always inclined to cut to the chase: no one honestly needs to know in which order he came to watch Pedro Costa's films, at which festivals, and which titles he was sent on VHS. But occasional prolixity and pedantry come with the package. This very diverse collection doesn't quite have the cohesion of his earlier *Movies as Politics* (1997), but it consistently shows a generous and restlessly questioning intellect at work. You could say of Rosenbaum's writing what he says of Godard's methodology in *Histoire(s)*: "It's a way of saying that cinema is concerned with the world, not with an alternative to it, and that cinema belongs to the world, including us."

♦ Jonathan Romney

The Faber Book of French Cinema

By Charles Drazin, Faber and Faber, 446pp, £25, ISBN 9780571218493

Writing a single volume on the whole history of French cinema is no small task. The author needs to assert his own voice while avoiding partiality, and to give sufficient detail without turning the book into a catalogue. Charles Drazin's *The Faber Book of French Cinema* is more successful at the latter than the former. It's a fluently written survey, from the Lumière brothers to *A Prophet*, taking in the inescapable milestones en route: the pioneers, the 1920s avant garde, the 1930s 'golden age', the German occupation, the New Wave.

Right from the attractive cover featuring Anna Karina in *Vivre sa vie* (1962) and the opening anecdote of the young Drazin's discovery of Eric Rohmer, the book nails its colours to the mast of art cinema. As part of the 'Faber Book of...' series, it aims at a non-specialist audience, but this shouldn't prevent a widening of the horizon, so it's disappointing to see, yet again, the vast range of French popular genres and stars marginalised.

It's a shame, because when a non-canonical director like Julien Duvivier is discussed, Drazin offers an enlightening



Iconic: Anna Karina in Jean-Luc Godard's 'Vivre sa vie'

comparison between his *Poil de carotte* (1932) and Truffaut's *The 400 Blows* (1959). Yet it's revealing that Jean-Pierre Melville's early films *Le Silence de la mer* (1948), *Les Enfants terribles* (1949) and *Bob le flambeur* (1956) – made when the director was a struggling young auteur – are extensively discussed, while his hugely popular films of the 1960s are barely examined. Of course Drazin is not the first to take Truffaut's polemic against mainstream French cinema at face value, nor the first to repeat tenacious myths such as the

catastrophic reception of Renoir's *La Règle du jeu* in 1939 (which is now challenged by French historians). "When the legend becomes fact, print the legend!" as a character in a rather different film once put it.

From the start Drazin rightly argues that French cinema should be better known outside France. He is right, too, that Anglophone critics seeking novelty and difference (from Hollywood) tend to pigeonhole French cinema in the quirky auteur corner, and ignore French genre cinema. But this leads him to a (to my

mind) excessive focus on Anglo-American views of French cinema rather than an examination of the films in their French context. Thus Duvivier's *Pépé le Moko* (1937) is discussed in relation to its American remake *Algiers*, Brigitte Bardot is seen mostly in terms of the US promotion of her films, and much space is devoted to the views of *The New York Times'* Bosley Crowther – all unwittingly reinforcing the Anglo-American bias.

This is an engaging and capable account of classic French art cinema, and as such will be a useful introduction. But this emphasis also means that recent decades are reduced to a handful of films and auteurs, leaving exciting recent French developments unexamined – to name but four: the rise of women directors, who directed 20 per cent of French features in 2009, a higher proportion than anywhere else in the world; the remarkable development of romantic comedy; the emergence of actors of North African origins in mainstream roles; and the internationalisation of French cinema with the likes of Michael Haneke and Hou Hsiao-Hsien. Sometimes fact is more exciting than legend. ♦ Ginette Vincendeau



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The classics

Does Ryan Gilbey, author of a BFI Modern Classic on *Groundhog Day*, really think the term "classic" is meaningless (Letters, *S&S*, January)? By using it to describe a film as recent as *The Social Network* (Reviews, *S&S*, November), I was well aware that decorum was being breached, but didn't want to use the weasel qualifier 'instant', still less 'modern' or 'American' – and the high valuation holds for me after a second viewing.

Obviously there is some kind of statute of limitations in effect before a film gets to be a classic, but what is it, exactly? How many times do we need to see it before we make the call, or assent to someone else's?

Henry K. Miller

By email

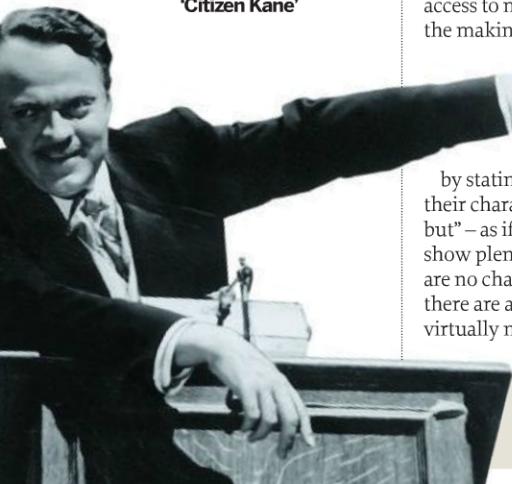
Proper Charlie

Following Ryan Gilbey's complaint about clichéd reviewing having no place in a magazine of record such as *Sight & Sound* (Letters, *S&S*, January), I wondered what it was that Michael Atkinson could possibly have swallowed to write as he does about the DVD *Chaplin at Keystone* (DVDs, *S&S*, January).

The blind assertion that "Chaplin is in the DNA of virtually every line of high and low culture that exists on the globe" is such obvious and nonsensical claptrap that Mr Atkinson doesn't do himself (or Chaplin) any favours. Mr Atkinson then continues: "The history that Chaplin helped make and helped make permanent [I don't follow this distinction] should be as crucial to us as the thrill of the present-day blockbuster – which will in turn become a captured yesterday sooner or later." Unfortunately this overblown phrasing – particularly the idea that the thrill of the blockbuster is crucial to us – is totally wrong-headed and presumptuous.

While by no means denigrating Chaplin, may I respectfully suggest that a more measured style, omitting uncomfortable words like 'epochal' and citing evidence, would do much

**The only way is up:
'Citizen Kane'**



LETTER OF THE MONTH

One last job

I was interested in Nick James's citation of Richard Fleischer's almost forgotten 1971 thriller *The Last Run* as an antecedent of Anton Corbijn's new film *The American* ('Shadow of a Gunman', *S&S*, December). Fleischer's underrated movie seems to me to belong to a sub-species of the gangster film in which a sympathetic veteran criminal tries – and ultimately fails tragically – to put everything right with one last ingenious but desperate throw of the dice. Perhaps the greatest exemplar of this sub-genre was Jacques Becker's *Touchez pas au grisbi* (1954); Brian De Palma's *Carlito's Way* (1993) provides a more recent example.

However, it seems to me that Corbijn's *The American* also contains echoes from a slightly earlier and perhaps even less remembered Hollywood crime film than *The Last Run*. S. Lee Pogostin's *Hard Contract* (1969), starring James Coburn, is the story, set in Brussels and Spain, of a professional assassin who – like Clooney's Jack/Edward in *The American* (right) – has been given a last, unwanted assignment, and who (also like Jack) wants to break out from his (literally) soul-destroying lifestyle. Coburn's killer also shares with Jack the American a taste for prostitutes.

more for the accuracy of the review, while giving a better idea of its subject.

Kevin J. Last
Haslemere, Surrey

Viva la resistance

Creating a canon – the subject of your editorial (*S&S*, January) – is an expression of critical thought. It is negative if the canon hardens into an arrogant assumption of infallibility, but positive when it continues to grow and change. After all, the major tool of criticism is comparison, which allows us to evaluate. Criticism, in relation to film reviews, will never be an exact science, but surely it is reasonable to expect a reviewer in a journal such as *Sight & Sound* to give us the basics?

Anton Bitel, in his review of *Skyline* (*S&S*, January), does not do this. Apart from the special effects, this movie is a total mess. The reviewer clearly had access to much information about the making of the

film, but it seems to have clouded his judgement.

He sums up the characters by stating that the writers "may sketch their characters with minimal nuance but" – as if this helps – "they [the writers] show plenty of genre savvy." In fact there are no characters to speak of. Instead there are actors about whom we learn virtually nothing (for example all we learn about the concierge



Hard Contract is not such a good film as *The American*, but it does have its moments, not least one in which Lee Remick asks Coburn whether he believes in God and – when Coburn lobs the question back to her – replies: "Sometimes I do, sometimes I don't." This memorable exchange might be compared to the small-town Italian priest Father Benedetto's address to Jack about hell, with its Marlovian "why this is hell, nor am I out of it" subtext.

Other filmic influences on *The American* abound, one of the

most striking being the 1946 Robert Siodmak/Anthony Veiller expansion for the screen of Hemingway's short story 'The Killers', in which the protagonist-victim – the Swede Ole Andersen, played by the young Burt Lancaster in his screen debut – is, like Clooney's Jack, seeking peace and anonymity in a small town – with the difference that Jack's pursuers are Swedes, whereas in *The Killers* it is a Swede who is the pursuit victim.

John Owston
Southall, Middlesex

is that he is a concierge), and none of whom we care about.

According to Bitel, the filmmakers propel "their horrifically bleak vision to its bitter end", but there is no end in terms of dramatic shape, and the "horrific vision" is simply a mishmash of bits and pieces from the *Alien* and *Matrix* movies, to name but the obvious. The film itself simply stops dead without any kind of resolution in sight.

According to Bitel, this film "dazzles viewers into sitting back and enjoying the amazing light show" – is he writing for *Hello!* magazine? – "possibly at the expense of their own brains. Resistance is futile." Really? I always thought that it was the job of the critic to resist crap, or at the very least to acknowledge a guilty pleasure but warn others of basic faults.

Brian McAvera
Downpatrick, Northern Ireland

Leave Welles alone

David Thomson ('The Mark of Kane', *S&S*, January) belongs to a group of people (which includes Simon Callow, Pauline Kael and others) dedicated to promoting the idea that Orson Welles was a 'flash in the pan' director who peaked with *Citizen Kane* and then mostly created unfinished mediocre work that was a product of his 'troubled' personality.

On the other hand, there is a group of people (which includes director Peter Bogdanovich, critics Jonathan Rosenbaum and Joseph McBride, and

of course myself) that find Welles' work fascinating in all its forms and decades, from his radio and theatre work in the 1930s to his groundbreaking cinematic work from *Kane* to *F for Fake*.

In his piece Thomson offers no evidence for 'toppling' *Citizen Kane* other than the fact that he thinks it's been at the top for too long. In Thomson-esque fashion, he writes a lot without saying much. What is evident from his article is that his vendetta against Orson Welles (even more perverse because it's disguised as admiration) has not stopped, and will not stop until *Kane* is stripped of its title as the best film of all time.

Whatever your opinion of Orson Welles and *Citizen Kane*, the poll is there as a serious, authoritative survey of critical opinion on what we call the canon. David Thomson can vote like everyone else in 2012. Why try and persuade voters to pursue a strategic vote policy? If we can't vote with our hearts for things like films, what's left?

Jon Barrenechea
By email

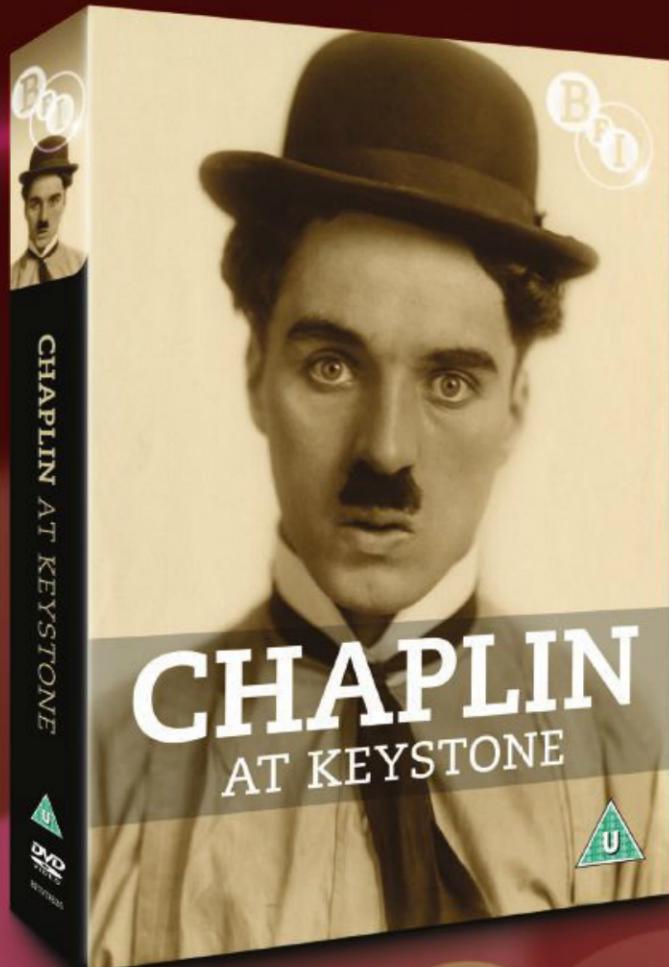
Additions & corrections

January 2011 p.65 *Easier with Practice*
Cert 15, room 8s, 9,012 ft +0 frames; p.69 *In Our Name* Cert 18, 92m 49s, 8,353 ft +8 frames; p.70 *Loose Cannons* Cert 12A, 112m 49s, 10,153 ft +8 frames; p.72 *Love Life* Cert 15, 112m 59s, 10,168 ft +8 frames; p.78 *On Tour* Cert 15, 111m 28s, 10,032 ft +0 frames; p.79 *Outcast* Cert 18, 97m 39s, 8,789 ft +4 frames; p.87 *The Thorn in the Heart* Cert PG, 86m 1s, 7,741 ft +8 frames
December 2010 p.64 UK title should be: *The Girl Who Kicked the Hornets' Nest*

READER OFFERS see page 22 for details

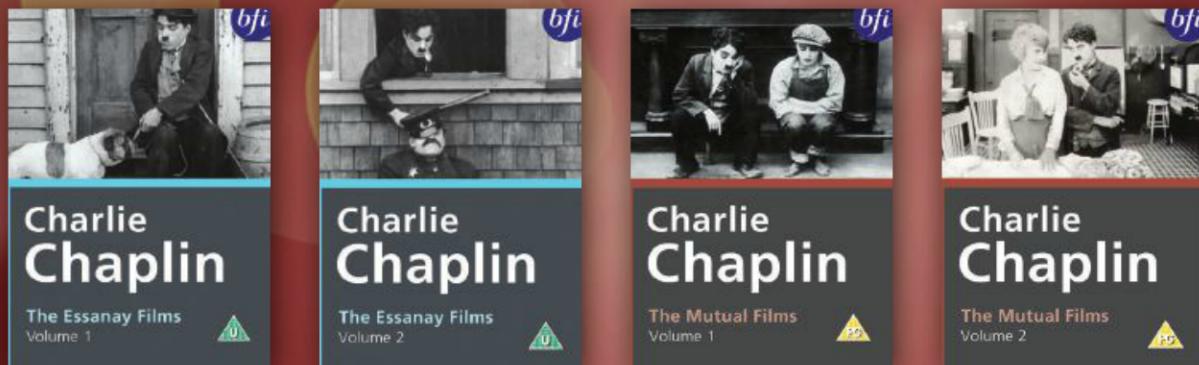
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